

E

230

.H834

















THE  
NARRATIVE  
OF  
Lieut. Gen. Sir WILLIAM HOWE, &c.

---

[ PRICE THREE SHILLINGS. ]



Howe, William, viscount  
" " " " " "

THE  
NARRATIVE  
OF  
Lieut. Gen. Sir WILLIAM HOWE,  
IN  
A COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
ON THE 29<sup>TH</sup> OF APRIL, 1779,  
RELATIVE TO  
HIS CONDUCT,  
DURING  
HIS LATE COMMAND OF THE KING'S TROOPS  
IN  
NORTH AMERICA:  
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,  
SOME OBSERVATIONS UPON A PAMPHLET,  
ENTITLED,  
LETTERS TO A NOBLEMAN.

---

THE THIRD EDITION.

---

L O N D O N :  
PRINTED BY H. BALDWIN, IN FLEET-STREET.  
SOLD BY R. BALDWIN, IN PATERNOSTER-ROW; P. ELMSLEY, IN THE STRAND;  
AND ALMON AND DEBRET, IN PICCADILLY.

MDCCCLXXXI.





---

---

THE  
NARRATIVE

OF

Lieut. Gen. Sir WILLIAM HOWE, &c.

IF the peculiarities of my situation be considered, I shall not be thought presumptuous in desiring the indulgence of the committee during the trespass I must this day commit upon their patience. The repugnance of his Majesty's ministers (in this house at least) to declare any opinion concerning the transactions of the American war during my command, although possessed of all the necessary, and only, documents, upon which a judgement could have been formed, impelled me to move, that my correspondence with the Secretary of State for the American department, might be laid before you. The most material parts of my conduct, the reasons upon which I acted, the plans which I suggested and executed, appear in that correspondence; and therefore to those who may have connected the whole in a regular series of dates and events, the detail into which I propose to enter may seem unnecessary. But I cannot flatter myself that the papers have been considered with such minute attention, nor can I presume to suppose, that all the circumstances of the American war have been invested with the partial view of clearing the conduct of the man who commanded the army. And, Sir, it is with that partial view I now rise—for I mean not to call in question the justice, nor the policy of that war.

B

I mean

I mean not to call in question the expediency of measures which have been framed, relaxed, or persevered in, by the councils at home. My object, at present, is confined to the explanation of my own conduct.

Many are the censures that have been passed upon me. The misrepresentations and false arguments of my enemies have made a deep impression upon minds too prompt to decide; whilst an ignorance of the true state of facts has left the unprejudiced in doubt. Those who alone could do me justice, have been silent: and therefore to the judgement of this committee, and to the impartiality of my country at large, I at last resort, flattering myself with the hope of an ample justification.

In the course of the great variety of business which fell to my lot, during such a wide and extensive command, faults must undoubtedly be perceived, but none I hope which can be suspected to have arisen from want of zeal, or from inactivity. In all military transactions, but more particularly in those of America, where the nature of the war, in all its points, is without example, the happiest commander will be he who escapes with the fewest blots.

The facts to which I principally wish to turn the attention of the committee, and which the papers upon your table bear witness to, are

1<sup>st</sup>. That I did not neglect to furnish the minister of the American department with every information, as well as with my ideas, relative to the conduct of the war from time to time.

2<sup>d</sup>. That I did not fail to give my opinions respecting what appeared practicable to be done, with the succours required, or expected from Europe, and with the force at different times on the spot.

3<sup>d</sup>. That my plans were carried into execution with as little deviation, as, from the nature of military operations, could have been expected.

4<sup>th</sup>. That

4th. That I never flattered the minister with improper hopes of seeing the war terminated in any one campaign, with the force at any one time under my command.

I shall now beg leave to trouble the committee with a narrative of those material operations of the war, which may lead to an impartial judgement upon my general conduct, which may obviate misconceived opinions concerning particular events, and which, with some few remarks upon the several passages of the correspondence as they arise, may elucidate the truth of the facts premised.

The evacuation of Boston was the first material occurrence, after my appointment to the command of his Majesty's forces in North America.

On the 9th of November, 1775, I received the Secretary of State's order, dated the 5th of September, to abandon that town before winter, and to move the army to New-York, or to some other place to the southward; my own reasons, indeed, against opening the campaign from Boston, had been in the mean time generally set forth in a letter to his lordship of the 9th of October. The late arrival of the order, and the deficiency of transport tonnage, rendered the removal of the troops impracticable till the 17th of March following, when I embarked with about 6000 rank and file, fit for duty, and about 900 sick.

It has not been insinuated that any disgrace was brought upon his Majesty's arms by the manner in which that town was evacuated. (a)

My letter of the 21st of March, 1776, accounts for my carrying the army, with the incumbrances then belonging to it, to  
B 2
Hallifax,

(a) In the examination of General Robertson (one of the witnesses called by Lord George Germain) an attempt was made to prove that considerable quantities of linen and woollen merchandizes, which might be of great use to the rebels, were left at Boston, upon the evacuation of that town, although it was in my power, to have carried the whole away. But though the General was of opinion that those goods might have been removed with the army, it was merely in the idea, conceived from report, that they might have been carried away, if the holds of the transports had been well stowed; for he acknowledged that we were in great want of shipping, and that we took with us all the vessels that were fit to go to sea.



Hallifax, in preference to any other port. Concluding that the reasons there given are satisfactory, I do not trouble the committee with any farther explanation, except that I think the army by going thither, received great benefit, not only from necessary refreshments, but from the opportunity of being exercised in line, a very material part of discipline, in which we were defective until that time. I might also add, that the troops performed very essential service at Halifax, by constructing redoubts, and other strong works, for the defence of the town and dock, which could not have been executed by the garrison.

My letters go on to show how the army was disposed of previous to the landing upon Long-Island, while waiting for the arrival of the troops from Europe, and from the expedition against South Carolina. That intermediate time, as I do not recollect, amongst the multiplicity of anonymous publications against me, any fault has been imputed, I pass over, remarking only, that from the violent heat of the weather, little active service could have been done, and that such service would probably have been attended with much sickness to the troops.

I beg leave here to say, that although, to save the time of the committee, I may omit to mention many transactions of the war, I shall be willing to solve all doubts which the members of this committee may entertain, with respect to circumstances not touched upon, or not sufficiently explained.

I hasten to the action at Bedford on Long-Island, the 27th of August, 1776, where a paragraph in my public letter of the 3d of September has been quoted against me as a violent charge. The paragraph is as follows. "Had the troops been permitted to go on, it is my opinion they would have carried the redoubts, but it was apparent the lines must have been ours at a cheap rate, by regular approaches, I would not risk the loss that might have been sustained in the assault, and ordered them back to a hollow way in the front of the works, out of the reach of musquetry."

This paragraph, I am free to own, I added to give here the same impression that I felt of the ardour of the troops upon that occasion. But I am at a loss to know from whence it has been supposed

supposed, that carrying the lines would have been followed by the defeat of the rebel army. The facts are these:—The rebels had a body of men posted in front of the lines, to guard against an attack from Flat-Bush, and from the lower road upon their right. These troops were defeated with considerable loss. The remainder of the corps was posted behind the lines, the main army being then on York-Island; so that admitting the works to have been forced on the day of action, the only advantage we should have gained would have been the destruction of a few more men, for the retreat of the greatest part would have been secured by the works constructed upon the heights of Brooklyn, opposite to New-York, and their embarkation covered by a number of floating batteries.

On the other hand, the most essential duty I had to observe was, not wantonly to commit his majesty's troops, where the object was inadequate. I knew well that any considerable loss sustained by the army could not speedily, nor easily, be repaired. I also knew that one great point towards gaining the confidence of an army (and a general without it is upon the most dangerous ground) is never to expose the troops, where, as I said before, the object is inadequate. In this instance, from the certainty of being in possession of the lines in a very few days, by breaking ground, to have permitted the attack in question, would have been inconsiderate, and even criminal. The loss of 1000, or perhaps 1500 British troops, in carrying those lines, would have been but ill repaid by double that number of the enemy, could it have been supposed they would have suffered in that proportion.

The necessary preparations, and erecting batteries, to facilitate the landing upon the island of New-York and battering the enemy's works at Horens-Hook, occupied us till the 15th of September, when the possession of New-York was effected, as appears in my letter of the 21st of September, 1776.

From that time to the 12th of October we were employed in fortifying the heights from Macgowan's-Pass to North River, about two miles from the enemy's most advanced intrenchments, and in getting possession of Paulus-Hook. Some time was also necessarily employed in enquiries respecting the face of the  
country

country to be possessed, upon a supposition that the enemy should remove from King's-Bridge. There was a necessity of entrenching upon the height I have mentioned, in order to cover New-York in the absence of the main army. My publick letters of the 23d, 24th, and 25th of September point out all these particulars.

With regard to the knowledge of the country, so necessary to be obtained previous to the movement from New-York, I beg leave to mention the difficulties we laboured under in that respect throughout the war. The country is so covered with wood, swamps, and creeks, that it is not open in the least degree to be known, but from post to post, or from accounts to be collected from the inhabitants entirely ignorant of military description. These circumstances were therefore the cause of some unavoidable delay in our movements.

I must here add, that I found the Americans not so well disposed to join us, and to serve us as I had been taught to expect; that I thought our farther progress for the present, precarious, and that I saw no prospect of finishing the war that campaign. These sentiments I communicated to the Secretary of State in the letters last mentioned.

From the 12th of October, the day the army landed on Frog's-Neck, to the 21st of the same month, we were employed in getting up stores and provisions, in bringing over the dragoons, the second division of Hessians, the carriages and horses for transporting provisions, artillery, ammunition, and baggage. Four or five days had been unavoidably taken up in landing at Frog's-Neck, instead of going at once to Pell's Point, which would have been an imprudent measure, as it could not have been executed without much unnecessary risk.

On the 28th of October the engagement at the White-Plains took place. But it has been asserted, that, by my not attacking the lines on the day of action, I lost an opportunity of destroying the rebel army; and it has been also said, that I might have cut off the enemy's retreat by the Croton-Bridge, Sir, an assault upon the enemy's right, which was opposed to the Hessian troops was intended. The committee must give me credit when I assure  
them,



them, that I have political reasons, and no other, for declining to explain why that assault was not made. Upon a minute enquiry those reasons might, if necessary, be brought out in evidence at the bar. If, however, the assault had been made, and the lines carried, the enemy would have got off without much loss, and no way had we, that I could ever learn, of cutting off their retreat by the Croton Bridge. I cannot conceive the foundation of such an idea. By forcing the lines we should undoubtedly have gained a more brilliant advantage, some baggage, and some provisions; but we had no reason to suppose that the rebel army could have been destroyed. The ground in their rear was such as they could wish, for securing their retreat, which indeed seemed to be their principal object. And, Sir, I do not hesitate to confess, that if I could by any manœuvre remove an enemy from a very advantageous position, without hazarding the consequences of an attack, where the point to be carried was not adequate to the loss of men to be expected from the enterprise, I should certainly adopt that cautionary conduct, in the hopes of meeting my adversary upon more equal terms.

But to proceed in my narrative.—My publick letter of the 30th of November relates the further proceedings of the army, until Lord Cornwallis arrived at Brunswick in the Jerseys, in which is included the taking of Fort Washington, afterwards called Fort Mifflin. I need not trouble the committee with other particulars in that period: But I must say I should have been highly blameable, had I ordered the noble lord to have followed the enemy beyond Brunswick, when the whole of his corps had not joined him.

I refer to my publick letter of the 20th of December for an account of the progress of that corps until the 14th of that month, when they went into cantonments, which I was hopeful they might have maintained. My first intentions were to have made Brunswick the left, and Elisabeth-Town, or Newark, the right of those cantonments; and my reason for extending to Trenton was, that a considerable number of the inhabitants came in with their arms, in obedience to the proclamation of the commissioners on the 30th of November. I took upon me to risk that post under the command of a brave officer, with the support  
of

of Colonel Donop at Bordentown, five miles distant, with a very strong corps. The two posts were occupied by nine battalions, the Hessian cavalry, and a party of the 16th regiment of light dragoons, amounting in the whole to upwards of 3000 men, with sixteen field pieces. The light infantry of the army, a brigade of infantry, and some dragoons, were posted at Princetown, in the chain of cantonments, twelve miles from Trenton.

But it has been objected to me that I ought not to have intrusted the important post of Trenton to the Hessian troops. My answer to this, if clearly understood, will I think be satisfactory, Military men will certainly understand it. The left, Sir, was the post of the Hessians in the line, and had I changed it upon this occasion it must have been considered as a disgrace, since the same situation held in the cantonments as in the camp. And it probably would have created jealousies between the Hessian and British troops, which it was my duty carefully to prevent.

Colonel Donop, who commanded the two posts, was perfectly satisfied with his situation, and so was Colonel Rhall. They both had timely information of the intended attack: The numbers of the enemy, I was credibly informed, did not exceed 3000, and if Colonel Rhall had obeyed the orders I sent to him for the erecting of redoubts, I am confident his post would not have been taken.

I would ask those who object to this part of the distribution, where could the Hessian troops have been better employed than in the defence of a post? In the last war they were esteemed not unequal to any troops in Prince Ferdinand's army, and I should do them much injustice were I not to say they were in very high order in America. Two of these very battalions had served in Germany with great credit, and the whole brigade under Colonel Rhall's command had given a recent proof of their bravery at the attack of Fort Mifflin.

The possession of Trenton was extremely desirable; could we have preserved it we should have covered the greatest part of the country to the eastward of Princetown, including the whole county of Monmouth, where I had reason to think there were many loyal inhabitants. We should also have been so near Phi-

ladelphia



Philadelphia that we might possibly have taken possession of it in the course of the winter; though I confess I had several reasons for doubting the expediency of that measure at that time.

My principal object in so great an extension of the cantonments was to afford protection to the inhabitants, that they might experience the difference between his majesty's government, and that to which they were subject from the rebel leaders. For, Sir, although some persons condemn me for having endeavoured to conciliate his majesty's rebellious subjects, by taking every means to prevent the destruction of the country, instead of irritating them by a contrary mode of proceeding, yet am I, from many reasons, satisfied in my own mind that I acted in that particular for the benefit of the king's service. Ministers themselves, I am persuaded, did at one time entertain a similar doctrine, and from a circumstance not now necessary to dwell upon, it is certain that I should have had little reason to hope for support from them, if I had been disposed to acts of great severity. Had it been afterwards judged good policy to turn the plan of the war into an indiscriminate devastation of that country, and had I been thought the proper instrument for executing such a plan, ministers, I presume, would have openly stood forth, and sent clear, explicit orders. Ambiguous messages, hints, whispers across the Atlantick, to be avowed, or disavowed at pleasure, would have been paltry safeguards for the honour and conduct of a commander in chief.

I now return to my narrative.—Previous to the loss of Trenton I had detached General Clinton with 6000 men to take possession of Rhode-Island, the success of which expedition is mentioned in my publick letter of the 20th of December 1776. This was one material point in the general plan of operations. And here I must beg leave to call the attention of the committee to my separate letter of the 30th of November, 1776, wherein is set forth my first plan for the next campaign, with the force requisite, in order, if possible, to finish the war in one year. My propositions were, that we should have 10,000 men to act on the side of Rhode-Island, and penetrate eastward into the country towards Boston, leaving 2000 for the defence of Rhode-Island, 10,000 in the province of New-York, to move up the North River to Albany, 5000 for the defence of York-Island and its De-

pendencies, 8000 to cover Jersey, and to keep General Washington's army in check, by giving a jealousy to Philadelphia, which as well as Virginia I proposed to attack in autumn, provided the success of other operations should have admitted of sending thither an adequate force. South Carolina and Georgia I proposed as objects for winter. But to carry this plan into execution I informed his Lordship, that ten ships of the line, and a re-inforcement of 15,000 rank and file would be absolutely necessary, besides an additional battalion of artillery. According to this calculation the army under my command would probably have consisted of 35,000 effective men, to oppose 50,000 voted by the congress for the next campaign, exclusive of the large bodies of militia, who were to be collected on the shortest notice. I mentioned at the same time the spirit infused into the people by their leaders from the strongest assurances of procuring the assistance of foreign powers, and that it was said Dr. Franklin was gone to France to solicit the aid of that court.

This letter of the 30th of November was received by the Secretary of State on the 30th of December. On the 9th of March, 1777, I received his lordship's answer, dated the 14th of January. This answer it is to be observed was by no means decisive. The determination upon my plan was postponed until the arrival of my next letter, when Major Balfour (one of my aides du camp, and then in England) was to be immediately despatched. My requisition, as has been just stated, was for 15,000 rank and file in order to complete the army to 35,000 effective men. The noble lord, in the letter I am now quoting, hopes that he shall be able to augment the army under my command to near 35,000, although he proposes sending me only 7,800. This misconceived calculation can no otherwise be accounted for, as I apprehend, than by his lordship's computing the sick, and the prisoners with the rebels, as a part of the real effective strength of the army; and yet I cannot see how such a mistake could have arisen, as my requisition was specifick, for 15,000 men, rank and file. His lordship further declares, that it is beyond his power to furnish me with the additional battalion of artillery. If any thing could be an alleviation of my disappointment in these respects, it was the assurance which accompanied it, that—  
 “ whatever degree of support the rebels had been taught to  
 “ expect



“ expect from foreign powers, his lordship had great reason to believe that Dr. Franklin would not be able to procure them any open assistance.”

During the doubts I entertained, whether the large re-inforcement I had requested would arrive in time for the execution of the extensive plan mentioned in my letter of the 30th of November, 1776, I had information, which I thought might be depended on, that the reduction of Pennsylvania was practicable, even upon the supposition that the whole of my strength, fit for duty at the opening of the campaign, might not exceed 19,000 men. I therefore suggested, in my separate letter of the 20th of December, 1776, a second plan, which was for acting next campaign in Pennsylvania, and which, when I was told I must expect a re-inforcement of only 7,800 men, little more than half my requisition, I concluded was to be adopted.

I remarked that by this plan the march towards Boston, which I had before proposed, must be deferred until the required reinforcements should arrive from Europe; but as these operations, perhaps of the last importance to the nation, might depend upon the exigences of the moment, I solicited his lordship to point out any general plans that might be thought most adviseable, as well with respect to the present strength of the army, as in the event of re-inforcements, remarking to me the periods of time in which I might expect the arrival of troops. This letter having been received in England on the 23d of February, 1777, which was long before General Burgoyne's departure, the minister had full opportunity of communicating the contents to that general, and of making such changes as he might judge expedient to co-incide with the northern operations.

Prefuming that it was my duty to omit no opportunity of communicating, though it might be deemed repeating, my ideas to the Secretary of State, my private letter of the 20th of January, 1777, was also full and explicit. I there assure him, that there must be another campaign, for I found that upon the good news from Quebec, in 1776, he had hoped, that a prospect was open for ending the war in one campaign. I pressed for more troops—I told him that a re-inforcement of 20,000 men was requisite, but that 15,000 would give us a superiority,

pointing out Philadelphia, for the reasons before mentioned, as the principal object; I observed, that an augmentation of 20,000 men would admit of my detaching a corps thither by sea, whilst the main body might penetrate by the way of Jersey. On the other hand I observed, that if the re-inforcements were small the operations would be of course curtailed. This letter also arrived in England prior to General Burgoyne's departure. Both letters are answered the 3d of March, 1777, and brought by Major Balfour, who arrived at New-York on the 8th of May.

I had now the Secretary of State's entire approbation of my second plan, the expedition to Pennsylvania; my reasons for deviating from my former plan being, as his lordship is pleased to express himself, solid and decisive. He laments, however, that instead of augmenting the army to 35,000, which I had requested, and which I had some reason to hope for, instead of even re-inforcing me with 7,800 he could only allow me to expect 2,900 that is to say not a fifth part of the number I had required. It is to be observed, that his lordship at the same time, notwithstanding so great a reduction of the re-inforcements requisite for the operations determined upon and approved of, recommends a warm diversion to be made on the coasts of Massachusetts-Bay and New Hampshire, as far as the main plan will permit. The admiral and I however, agreeably to his Lordship's commands, consulted upon the expediency of the diversion, and in my letter of the third of June, 1777, I informed the Secretary of State, that we found it not to be practicable without interfering materially with those more important operations of the campaign which had been approved of by himself, and which were already too much curtailed from a want of a land force.—The army fit for actual duty at this time, exclusive of about 2000 provincials, was 14,000 short of the number I had expected.

But to resume the chain of my correspondence. Finding by the Secretary of State's, letter of the 14th of Jan. 1777, received on the 9th of March following, that the re-inforcements were not to be expected, I totally relinquished, in my secret letter of the 2d of April, the idea of any offensive operation, except that to the Southward, and a diversion occasionally upon Hudson's-River.



River. I informed the Secretary of State that the principal part of the plan formerly proposed could no longer be thought of; that the Jerseys must be abandoned, and Pennsylvania be invaded only by sea; that in the former campaign my force was equal to the operations, but that in the ensuing one, from the several posts necessary to be preserved, the offensive army would be too weak for rapid success; and that restricted as I was from entering upon more extensive operations, by the want of force, my hopes of terminating the war that year were vanished; that notwithstanding the whole rebel army, 50,000 men, voted in autumn, might not be raised, the enemy would have a numerous militia in the field, in addition to their standing force, and a good train of artillery. I at the same time transmitted my distribution of the army for the campaign, by which it is to be observed, that my real effective force exclusive of 3000 provincials amounted only to 18,100 (*b*).

The noble Lord's answer to this letter, dated the 18th of May, 1777, contains a repeated approbation of the expedition to Pennsylvania; but it is remarkable in other respects.—He states his inability to furnish me with the supplies requested, and is concerned to find that I do not imagine my force to be as suitable to the operations of the ensuing campaign as I had confessed it was to those of the last. These expressions, Sir, require observation.—They seem eager to catch me in the confession that my force was suitable to the operations of the last campaign, and would from thence imply, that my force was equally suitable to the operations of any other campaign. Now, Sir, even if I had not explained my idea upon the point (which however I clearly did) I think it might have been obvious to any man less acquainted than his lordship with military reasoning, that the force which had been sufficient to take possession of New-York, and other strong holds of the enemy, could not, after the necessary divisions for preserving the variety of posts we had gained, be equally suitable to the making of new conquests. For is it not self-evident, that the power of an army must diminish in proportion to the decrease of their numbers? And must not their numbers for the field necessarily decrease, in proportion to the

TOWNS,

(*b*) In stating numbers present, rank and file fit for duty is always meant.

towns, posts, or forts, which we take, and are obliged to preserve? But his Lordship proceeds to say, that his concern (on account of this imagination of mine) is in a great degree alleviated by the intelligence which he daily receives, of the rebels finding the utmost difficulty in raising an army to face his majesty's troops—From the supposed weakness of the enemy, and the good inclination of the inhabitants, he has every reason to expect that my success in Pennsylvania will enable me to raise amongst them such a force, as may be sufficient for the interior defence of the province—He declines a particular consideration of the advantages which may be expected from a successful execution of my present plan, but is pleased to inform me (in contradiction to my repeated representations and assertions) that he is inspired with no small degree of hope, that this campaign will put an end to the unhappy contest. Thus, Sir, all my positive assurances, arising from a declared want of force, and from a plain state of facts, are here answered with a single argument of his own delusive hopes, built upon a supposition of the enemy's weakness: To what a dilemma is a commander reduced, when, after having repeatedly complained of his deficiency of strength, the minister, from information collected here at home, or from hopes suggested by fears, opposes his own conjecture (I cannot call it judgement) and tells him, that decisive success is still expected from him? If the powers of this country, or the extent of his Lordship's influence, could not have raised the force required, that answer would have been satisfactory to me and no reflection upon himself. That answer would have relieved my mind from an apprehension I began to entertain, that my opinions were no longer of weight; and that of course the confidence so necessary to the support, satisfaction, and indeed, security, of every man in a responsible situation, was withdrawn. If the noble Lord had thought that my requisition for more troops was unnecessary, and that the force he had already furnished was adequate, why did he not take the manly part of appointing some other person to fulfil those sanguine expectations, which from duty and conviction I had laboured to discountenance!

In order to preserve, as well as I can, the historical chronology, amidst such numerous events and quotations, I must in  
 I this



this place remind the committee, that in my letter to the Secretary of State of the 2d of April 1777, I enclosed a copy of a confidential letter which I wrote on the 5th of the same month spontaneously to Sir Guy Carleton; I say spontaneously, because I had not at that time received any official information, concerning the plan of the northern expedition which I conceived was to take place that year. It may be recollected, that the substance of this letter was, that I should probably be in Pennsylvania at the time when the northern army would be ready to enter the province of New-York; that little assistance was to be expected from me to facilitate their approach, as a want of sufficient strength in my own army would probably not admit of my detaching a corps to act up Hudson's River in the beginning of the campaign.

On the 5th of June I received a copy of the Secretary of State's letter to Sir Guy Carleton, dated the 26th of March 1777, wherein he communicates to him the plan of the northern expedition, and adds, "that he will write to Sir William Howe by " the first packet."

I must observe, that this copy of a letter to Sir Guy Carleton, though transmitted to me, was not accompanied with any instructions whatsoever; and that the letter intended to have been written to me by the first packet, and which was probably to have contained some instructions, was never sent.

I now come to the summer of 1777, passing over the expeditions in March and April to Peek's-Kill and Danbury.

The progress of our army in Jersey being also fully mentioned in my letters upon the table, I likewise pass over the various occurrences there, previous to the embarkation at Staten-Island. But as I have been blamed for not marching, before I left Jersey, to attack General Washington, posted at Middlebrook, I must beg leave to trouble the committee with a few words upon that point.

To have attacked General Washington in that strong post I must necessarily have made a considerable circuit of the country; and having no prospect of forcing him, I did not think it  
advisable

adviseable to lose so much time as must have been employed upon that march, during the intense heat of the season.

Exclusive of this consideration, our return must have been through a very difficult and exhausted country, where there was no possibility of keeping up the communication with Brunswick, from whence alone we could draw our provisions; and the force with me at that time amounting only to about 11000 men, it would not admit of sufficient detachments to preserve the communication. The movement which I did make in two columns was with a view of drawing on an action, if the enemy should have descended from his post, and been tempted towards the Delaware, in order to defend the passage of the river, on a supposition that I intended to cross it. But as the position of my first column at Hillsborough must have induced that idea, and yet had not the desired effect, I determined to return to Brunswick, and to follow the plan which had been approved by the minister. These reasons, together with those assigned in my letter of the 5th of July, 1777, will I hope sufficiently account for my not attacking General Washington upon that occasion. I must also observe, that even so long before as in my letter of the 2d of April, I declared it was not my intention to undertake any offensive operation in the Jerseys, unless some very advantageous opportunity should offer.

But it has been asked, why I did not cross the Delaware, and proceed by land to Philadelphia? To this I answer, that, from a want of sufficient means to pass so large a river, I judged the difficulties and the risk too great, more especially as the enemy had a corps ready for the defence of it, exclusive of their main army in my rear.

I have already shown, that finding the promised re-inforcements were not to be expected, I informed the Secretary of State that the plan first proposed could no longer be thought of; that the Jerseys must be abandoned, and Pennsylvania be invaded only by sea. The communication for provisions through such an extent of country could not possibly be maintained with the force then at my command. This, Sir, is surely a satisfactory answer to the charge of my not having proceeded to Philadelphia at that time by land.

In



In my next letter of the 7th of July, 1777, I observed  
 “ that the war was now upon a far different scale with respect  
 “ to the increased powers and strength of the enemy, than it  
 “ was last campaign, their officers being much better, with an  
 “ addition of several from the French service, and a respectable  
 “ train of field artillery: That 50 pieces of brass cannon had been  
 “ landed at Boston, and that the rebel army in Jersey had al-  
 “ ready with it a field train of 40 pieces—That unless the  
 “ British regiments were completed with drafts and good re-  
 “ cruits, we should soon lose our consequence by the current  
 “ casualties of a campaign, even without a general action :  
 “ That a corps of 10,000 Russians, effective fighting men, might  
 “ insure the success of the war to Great-Britain in another cam-  
 “ paign: But that if they were not to be had, and if we  
 “ should succeed this campaign in the possession of Pennsylv-  
 “ vania, the Jerseys, and the province of New York (which  
 “ I had before said must in a great measure depend upon the  
 “ success of the northern army) the drafts of troops in that  
 “ case for the preservation of them in the next campaign, would  
 “ be great, at the same time that a considerable force would be  
 “ requisite for the reduction of the northern provinces, wherein  
 “ three armies should be employed to make it effectual : And  
 “ that even in our present state, twenty regular battalions were  
 “ employed for the security of York-Island with its Dependencies,  
 “ and Rhode-Island.”

It may be observed, that I made various alterations from time to time in the plans of operations, but I flatter myself they will be found solid, so far as they relate to the distribution of the troops to Rhode-Island, New-York, and the main army.

With regard to the main army, the question is, “ Whether it  
 “ could have been disposed to better advantage than upon  
 “ the expedition which took place to Pennsylvania?”—an expe-  
 dition said by some gentlemen to have been the cause of the  
 subsequent misfortunes : Those gentlemen will, I presume,  
 endeavour to support this strong assertion by evidence of the  
 officers, the General officers, upon whose opinions they profess  
 to have founded their judgement. If there are any in this Com-  
 mittee who have formed a similar conclusion from their own  
 D reasoning,

reasoning, I trust they will this day favour me with their ground for such opinion, unless they should be satisfied with what I am going to state in my justification. And in making this request I know I address myself to men of honour, who cannot mean a wanton accusation, but who may wish to be satisfied in points not sufficiently explained.

And here, Sir, although I might shelter myself from this violent charge, by referring to the complete approbation, as well as the acquiescence of the Secretary of State; and might answer every objection by the short observation, that the reasons for adopting this expedition are adjudged by his Lordship to be solid and decisive; yet am I content to wave that justification, and to stand entirely upon the merits and policy of the measure itself.

Persons of some authority, I am told, have said, “ that the army ought to have gone into New-England, others that it ought to have gone up Hudson’s River.” Permit me to examine the propriety of both these opinions, by considering what would have been the consequences, if either of them had been adopted.

Suppose, in the first place, it had gone to New-England, would that measure have led to a conclusion of the war? I think not. For, Sir, wherever, the main body of our army had gone, there most assuredly would General Washington have gone also, but that he would have avoided a general action, I am authorised to say, not only from his constant uniform conduct in that respect (and in which, no doubt, he acted judiciously) but also from this very obvious reason: He knew we could not have kept any part of Connecticut in the winter, except one or two places upon the coast of the Sound; situations which could not have forwarded the recovery of that province.—In Connecticut, therefore, there was no object for which he could have been tempted to risk a general action.

Besides, the provinces of New England are not only the most populous, but their militia, when brought to action, the most persevering of any in all North America; and it is not to be doubted that General Washington, with his main army, would have followed me into a country where the strength of the Continent, encouraged by his presence, would have been most speedily collected.

In Pennsylvania the prospect was very different. The increase of force which that country could afford to Washington was small in comparison to the other, and the defence of Philadelphia was an object, which I justly concluded would engage the whole of his attention. It was incumbent upon him to risk a battle, to preserve that Capital. And as my opinion has always been, that the defeat of the rebel regular army is the surest road to peace, I invariably pursued the most probable means of forcing its Commander to action, under circumstances the least hazardous to the royal army; for even a victory, attended by a heavy loss of men on our part, would have given a fatal check to the progress of the war, and might have proved irreparable.

These, Sir, were my inducements at the time, for carrying his Majesty's arms into the province of Pennsylvania in preference to those of New-England. (a)

Had the re-inforcements I required been granted, New England would have had a share in the general operations of the campaign while the main body acted to the southward. But with an army upon the smaller scale, that plan was impracticable, and I have already given my reasons why I could not carry the main army into those provinces, unless I had been really desirous of protracting the war for my private advantage, a motive which has been basely imputed to me by those who wish to perpetrate the ruin both of my professional and my private character.

The second suggestion is, that I ought to have gone up Hudson's-River, in order to facilitate the approach of the northern army to Albany. What would have been the consequences of such an expedition? Before the object of it could have been attained, the forts in the Highlands must have been carried, which would probably have cost a considerable number of men, defended, as they would have been, by General Washington's whole force. But these forts being carried, how would the enemy have acted? In one of these two ways: He would either have put himself between me and New-York, or between me and the northern army. In either case I am of opinion, that

D 2

the

(a) I have omitted a computation of the strength of the New-England provinces, because it is impossible to speak of it with a sufficient degree of accuracy.



the success of our efforts upon Hudson's-River, could not from the many difficulties in penetrating through so very strong a country, have been accomplished in time to have taken possession of Philadelphia that campaign. But admitting I had at length reached Albany, what should I have gained, after having expended the campaign upon that object alone, that I had not a right to expect by drawing off General Washington, with the principal American army, from any operations on that side?

When it is considered how invidious and how minute a scrutiny has been made into my conduct, and into the motives of my conduct, I shall not be thought to speak absurdly if I say, that had I adopted the plan of going up Hudson's-River, it would have been alledged, that I had wasted the campaign with a considerable army under my command, merely to ensure the progress of the northern army, which could have taken care of itself, provided I had made a diversion in its favour, by drawing off to the southward the main army under General Washington. Would not my enemies have gone farther, and insinuated, that, alarmed at the rapid success which the honourable General had a right to expect when Ticonderoga fell, I had enviously grasped a share of that merit which would otherwise have been all his own? and let me add, would not Ministers have told you, as they truly might, that I had acted without any orders or instructions from them; that General Burgoyne was directed to force his own way to Albany, and that they had put under his command troops sufficient to effect the march? Would they not have referred you to the original and settled plan of that expedition (which is amongst the papers on your table) to prove that no assistance from me was suggested? and would they not readily have impressed this house with the conclusion, that if any doubt could have arisen in their minds of the success of such a well digested plan, they should, from the beginning, have made me a party in it, and have given me explicit instructions to act accordingly?—

And now, Sir, having sufficiently, and I hope satisfactorily spoken to the two plans, which some persons have judged ought to have taken place; I return to the only one which, in my opinion, could with propriety have been adopted.—After the

most mature deliberation, and frequent consultation with the Admiral, Lord Cornwallis, and other General officers; after weighing all the circumstances of every possible operation; after the most probable conclusion, founded upon the best intelligence, that General Washington would follow me, I determined on pursuing that plan which would make the most effectual diversion in favour of the northern army, which promised in its consequences the most important success, and which the Secretary of State at home, and my own judgement upon the spot, had deliberately approved.

It was not one province, but three, that I conceived we had reason to take possession of at the end of the year 1777. The first object was Philadelphia, a city from whence, by means of the River Delaware, the rebels drew the greatest part of their supplies—the capital of Pennsylvania—the capital, as it were, and residence of the Congress in North-America, situated in one of the most fertile provinces of that Continent, and in which I include the three lower counties on Delaware. Added to Pennsylvania, I concluded that the arrival of the northern army at Albany, would have given us the province of New-York and the Jerseys; all which events I was confident would lead to a prosperous conclusion of the war.

Early in July, 1777, I began the embarkation—I wished however to remain until the arrival of Sir Henry Clinton from Europe, who was to command at New-York in my absence; and until I should learn something of the progress of the northern army. On the 5th of July Sir Henry Clinton arrived, and on the 15th I received an express from General Burgoyne, informing me of his success at Ticonderoga, “that his army was in good health, and that Ticonderoga would be garrisoned from Canada, which would leave his force complete for further operations.” In my answer I said, that I expected General Washington would follow me to Pennsylvania, but that if, contrary to my expectation, he should go northward, I should soon be after him. It may also be proper in this place to advert to the instructions I left with Sir Henry Clinton, and to several of my subsequent letters to that General. As I omitted to send copies of them to the Secretary of State, they are not upon the table; but I have them  
in

in my hand, and with leave of the Committee will read a short extract of them.

*Extract of Instructions from Sir William Howe to Sir Henry Clinton, dated 9th July, 1777.*

“ UPON my departure from hence with the army,  
 “ you will be pleased to take the command of the troops mentioned in the enclosed return, and of all other troops now here, or that may arrive in my absence. You will make such changes in the position of them as you may judge most conducive to his Majesty’s service for the defence of this important post, and its dependencies, whereby I would be understood to include King’s-Bridge, Long-Island, Staten-Island, Paulus-Hook, and Sandy-Hook ; at the same time it is by no means my intention to prevent your acting offensively, in case an opportunity should offer, consistent with the security of this place, as above-mentioned, which is always to be regarded as a primary object.”

*Extract of a Letter from Sir William Howe to Sir Henry Clinton, dated 15th July, 1777.*

“ I Have directed the 7th and 26th regiments of foot, and Colonel D’Eib’s regiment of Anspach to remain here under your orders, in addition to the troops of which you have received a return, and am hopeful, if you see occasion to act offensively, those corps may prove of essential use.

“ Upon the arrival of Major-General Sir Thomas Wilson, you will be pleased to order him to join me, unless from any offensive operations you may have in view at the time, you shall find his presence necessary for that service, in which case you will keep him under your command.”

*Extract of a Letter from Sir William Howe to Sir Henry Clinton, dated off Delaware, 30th of July, 1777.*

“ IT is not possible for me to say at this time when I shall be able to send re-inforcements to you, but I beg you  
 “ may



“ may be assured I shall not fail to do it, as soon as expedient :  
 “ In the mean while, if you can make any diversion in favour  
 “ of General Burgoyne’s approaching Albany, with security to  
 “ King’s-Bridge, I need not point out the utility of such a  
 “ measure.”

From these extracts it is to be observed, that I gave full power to Sir Henry Clinton to act offensively, if opportunity should offer, consistent with the defence of New-York and its Dependencies, and that the facilitating the approach of the northern army, by a diversion in its favour, if practicable, was not out of my thoughts, although I had received no instructions whatsoever upon that head.

The Committee will now permit me to state the distribution of the whole army under my command, at the time of my departure to the southward. For the defence of Rhode-Island there were about 3000 men ; at New-York about 8500, exclusive of the sick and convalescents of those corps, and of the southern army, and a small body of militia upon Long-Island. These two corps I judged to be not more than sufficient for their situations at that time, especially in the view of Sir Henry Clinton’s acting upon occasion, to a certain degree offensively, in favour of the northern army—My own corps, to be opposed to the enemy’s principal army, was nearly 14000, and knowing General Washington to have about 15,000, exclusive of almost any number he pleased of militia, I could not think it adviseable to weaken any of those corps, by detaching from them for an expedition to the northward by sea.

The embarkation being finished, we sailed from New-York the 23d of July, and arrived off the Delaware on the 30th. Several days must have been employed to surmount the difficulties of getting up the river, and I inferred from thence, that I should not be able to land the troops before General Washington would be in force at Wilmington, where there was also a corps : There was besides no prospect of landing above the confluence of the Delaware and Christiana-Creek, at least the preparations the enemy had made for the defence of the river, by galleys, floating batteries, fireships, and fire rafts, would have made such

an attempt extremely hazardous. I had also to consider that the country below, where the troops must have landed, and where only the transports could have laid in security (I mean about Reedy-Island) was very marshy, and the roads upon narrow causeways intersected by creeks: I therefore agreed with the Admiral to go up Chesapeak-Bay, a plan which had been preconcerted, in the event of a landing in the Delaware proving, upon our arrival there, ineligible. It is to be observed, that if we could not have landed above Wilmington we should have been under the necessity of going the same route we took from the head of Elk, by way of Aikens's Tavern, otherwise called Pencadder.

Our going up Chesapeak-Bay alarmed the provinces of Virginia and Maryland, and diverted a body of their troops, which did not join General Washington until after the battle of Brandywine. Another circumstance much in our favour attended this change: Our troops by being on board ship in the hot month of July and part of August, escaped an almost certain fatality by sickness, in which the enemy suffered much at that time. But, for this I do not take credit, as I was anxious to get forward, and no delay arose from that consideration. I will, however, declare it as my opinion, that in those two months the troops should be exposed as little as possible in the field in America.

On the 16th of August we entered Chesapeak-Bay, and there I received the Minister's letter of the 18th of May, 1777, wherein I am again told, that my last plan is approved, and in the same period, that he trusts "whatever I may meditate, it " will be executed in time for me to co-operate with the " northern army." Were I to be permitted to account for this expectation, I would say, it must have been founded upon an idea, that the possession of that most important object, Philadelphia, was to be obtained without any great efforts of the enemy for its defence—At least I must conclude the noble Lord apprehended none. The fact however is, that Mr. Washington opposed our progress with his whole force. It is also to be remarked, that, although the idea of going up Hudson's River had not entered into any of the reduced plans which I sent home,  
and



and which met with approbation, yet, in this letter it is suggested at a time when there could be no possibility of carrying it into execution, consistently with the approved expedition I was then upon—I was now under the necessity of proceeding (*a*).

I pass over the time between the landing of the army near the head of Elk, and the battle of Brandywine. But understanding some fault has been attributed to me for making a division of my force to bring on that action, I flatter myself it will not be thought impertinent to say a few words on that subject.

To bring the enemy to an action was my object, and being confident that General Washington was studious to avoid it, unless under most favourable circumstances, some art and some hazard was necessary to accomplish my purpose.

The movements made on this occasion, which may be found in my letter of the 10th of October, 1777, were not repugnant to sound principles, and it is no small consolation to me to know independent of the event, that I have the opinions of the most judicious officers in the army on the spot, to support a measure which some gentlemen, from what authority I know not, have

E

been

(*a*) Lord George Germain, in his answer to this part of my speech, complained of my neglect of duty in point of correspondence, by declaring that after I had embarked for Pennsylvania, two months elapsed without his hearing from me. I took the earliest opportunity of replying to this charge; the fact stands thus:—On the 16th of July I wrote to his lordship, informing him, that I proposed going up the Delaware, in order to be nearer New-York than if I went up the Chesapeake, *as I once intended*, and which route I preferred to that of the Delaware, provided the enemy discovered a disposition to defend Pennsylvania. This letter was received by the noble lord on the 22d of August. My next letter was dated the 30th of August, from the head of Elk; but it happened that the Swallow-packet, carrying that letter, had a very uncommon length of voyage, and did not reach England till the 28th of October, which accounts for his lordship's having been two months without hearing from me, my letter of the 16th of July having reached England on the 22d of August. The noble Lord, when he was so unusually long without receiving a letter from me, might have conjectured the possibility of a packet's having a tedious voyage; of its having been lost; or of its having been taken by the enemy. Indeed he might also have conjectured from the words I have quoted in my letter of the 16th of July, that I was gone up the Chesapeake, which would necessarily lengthen my voyage from New-York; and finally he ought to have compared the dates of the letters themselves, and not the dates of their arrival.

been pleased to censure. But at the same time that I am reflected upon on one hand, for hazarding too much, I am blamed on the other, for not making the action more decisive, and for not following up the victory more closely.

To demonstrate the impracticability of a vigorous pursuit in a hostile country (but more particularly in America than in any other country I have seen) or the inutility of attempting it farther than was done, in the peculiar state of the army at that time, would be trespassing too much upon the indulgence of the Committee. I flatter myself it will suffice to say, that from a due regard to the wounded, the importance of possessing the post at Wilmington for their accommodation, and for the security of the prisoners, no movement could have been made sooner, or more effectual, under such circumstances, than the advance of the two corps with Major-General Grant and Lord Cornwallis towards Chester; and I must be allowed to insist there was no avoidable delay in the approach to Philadelphia by Valley Forge, the Schuylkill, by the nearer route through Derby, being impassable: nor any opportunity lost of bringing the enemy to farther action between Dilworth and German-Town. This I nearly effected on the 17th of September when he was upon his march on the Lancaster road, but the extreme violence of the weather rendered every effort to get forward impracticable. They had therefore an opportunity of evading the approach of the King's army, by a forced march into a very rough mountainous country, where it was certain they could not be followed. But my endeavours to get at the enemy, whatever was thought by those actually engaged in them, have been treated here as ill-judged, feebly prosecuted, and void of enterprise, which last censure has been even extended to the general conduct during my command.

I shall not descend to minute refutations, but I beg leave to say, and I assert it with firmness, that almost every movement of the war in North-America was an act of enterprise, clogged with innumerable difficulties. A knowledge of the country, intersected, as it every where is, by woods, mountains, waters, or morasses, cannot be obtained with any degree of precision necessary to foresee, and guard against, the obstructions that may occur.

In a word, Sir, whatever may be the aim or wish of my enemies in propagating these aspersions, it is from my conscience I affirm to this Committee, and to my country at large, that I never neglected an opportunity of bringing the enemy to action, where it could have been done upon a comparative view of all circumstances at the time, and consistent with the caution indispensably requisite in a situation always so critical, that a material check to his Majesty's arms might have been productive of fatal consequences to the interests of this country in America.

The next point is the attack made upon the King's army at German-Town on the 4th of October, which has been maliciously represented as a surprise, thereby throwing a stigma upon the vigilance of the troops, but more particularly upon that of the General.

The circumstances which encouraged the enemy to make this attack are set forth in my letter of the 10th of October, 1777, as well as the reasons for making the detachments which caused that encouragement. In addition to the account there given, I beg leave to inform the Committee, that my first position at German-Town was taken to cover Philadelphia, during the operations carrying on against Mud-Island, and was therefore more extended than it otherwise would have been. It is true, however, that I did not expect the enemy would have dared to approach after so recent a defeat as that at Brandywine.

In this Idea I did not direct any redoubts to be raised for the security of the camp or out-posts, nor did I ever encourage the construction of them at the head of the line when in force, because works of that kind are apt to induce an opinion of inferiority, and my wish was, to support by every means the acknowledged superiority of the King's troops over the enemy, which I considered more peculiarly essential, where strength was not to be estimated by numbers, since the enemy in that respect, by calling in the force of the country upon any emergence, must have been superior.

I confess also it was for the above reasons I did not change my position, after making the detachments beforementioned, choosing rather to trust to the well-tried vigilance of the troops,



and the activity of the patrols (though I had intimation that an attack might be made) than to give the army unnecessary fatigue, by making more cautionary preparations.

In my confidence in the troops I was not disappointed; the enemy's approach was discovered by our patrols, and I had early notice of it. The line was presently under arms, and although it must be admitted that the out-posts and light-infantry in one quarter, were driven back, it must be equally admitted, that they were soon effectually supported, and the enemy repulsed from the only place where the smallest impression was made.

I cannot mention this transaction without paying a due acknowledgement to an excellent officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Musgrave, whose gallant and judicious conduct, upon this occasion, will, I hope, some day meet with its reward.

I have stated these facts, in addition to the account in my letter upon the table, principally to shew, that how much soever I may be supposed to have erred in my own conjecture, the imputation of the army being unguarded or surprised is not founded in truth.

On the 19th of October I found it adviseable to remove to Philadelphia, to expedite the reduction of Mud-Island, which proved to be more difficult than was at first supposed. To this end the possession of Red-Bank on the East side of the Delaware engaged my attention. The event of that enterprise is contained in my letter of the 25th of October, 1777, but as I understand that a pointed reference was made to it in this House, last year, by the noble Lord in the American department, I shall briefly state, to the best of my recollection, the circumstances under which Colonel Donop, a brave and gallant officer, was detached on this service. He earnestly intreated Lord Cornwallis, in whose corps he served, to express his wishes for an opportunity to signalize himself, and the Hessian troops under his command. My design on Red-Bank affording the earliest opportunity, I desired Lord Cornwallis to explain the nature of the service, and if it should meet with his approbation, to offer him the command, which he very readily accepted. On the evening of his departure Colonel Donop desired to know from  
Lord



Lord Cornwallis, if it was expected he should make the attack at all hazards, when Lord Cornwallis assured him from me, that he was to be guided by his own judgement on the spot, but that the attack was to be made, unless he saw good reason to the contrary. If I may conclude from the manner in which I parted with Colonel Donop, or from the approbation the directions given to him received from his immediate and most valuable commander, General Knyphausen, I have every reason to believe he went upon the service perfectly satisfied.

The committee will do me the justice to believe I have no other motive for this explanation than to make known what really passed with respect to the orders given to Colonel Donop upon this enterprize. The intrepidity and vigour with which it was attempted, reflect the highest honour on the commander and his troops, and the loss sustained upon the occasion cannot be too much regretted.

It has been asserted, that an early possession of Red-Bank must have been immediately followed by the reduction of Mud-Island, to which I in some measure agree, that is to say, after the enemy had put it in a state of defence: Before that time such corps as could have been spared from the army, must have been established and supplied with stores and provisions, with great difficulty, while exposed to the annoyance of the armed galleys and floating batteries; and before the army was drawn nearer to Philadelphia the support of a post, so detached, would have been very precarious.

I must nevertheless acknowledge my great disappointment in the time that proved necessary for the reduction of Mud-Island; but if the violent rains, by filling the trenches, and sapping the foundations of the batteries, had not caused a considerable delay in the destruction of the enemy's defences, which prevented an earlier co-operation of the ships of war, I probably should have been much less deceived in my expectations. ✓

My dispatch of the 13th of December, 1777, respecting the movement to White-Marsh, and my conduct on that occasion, is so explicit as to make farther observations unnecessary.—The motives from which I acted at that time were, I think, just, and

if they appear inconclusive to any here, I can only esteem myself unfortunate in the want of their concurrence.

The activity of the army during the winter is undeniably proved by my subsequent letters: But as many of the transactions were in their effects less important to the grand object than to the credit of the troops, the most material only were specified in my dispatches.

The entrenched situation of the enemy at Valley-Forge, twenty-two miles from Philadelphia, did not occasion any difficulties so pressing as to justify an attack upon that strong post during the severe weather, and though every thing was prepared with that intention, I judged it imprudent, until the season should afford a prospect of reaping the advantages, that ought to have resulted from success in that measure; but having good information in the spring that the enemy had strengthened the camp by additional works, and being certain of moving him from thence when the campaign should open, I dropped all thoughts of an attack. My letter of the 19th of April, 1778, gives further reasons for this part of my conduct.

From the remainder of my correspondence, gentlemen must have seen, that I continued my remonstrance for more troops. Perhaps it was impossible for the minister to send more.—Such an acknowledgement would have been no reflection upon himself, and would have relieved my mind from the uneasiness it laboured under, in conceiving, that my opinions of the necessity of reinforcements were deemed nugatory: and that, of course, I had lost the confidence of those, who were in the first instance to judge of my conduct. It cannot be surprising, that finding myself in this situation, I desired his Majesty's permission to withdraw from the command.—I gave the true reason for that request—the loss of confidence.—The reason was tacitly acknowledged to be well founded, for it was acquiesced in; and his Majesty was pleased to appoint a successor to the command of the army.

With regard to the complaint I made of the loss of confidence, the noble Lord in the American department must have done great injustice to my sensibility, when he expressed an  
opinion

opinion, upon a former occasion, that I alluded merely to the slight put upon my recommendations ; not but that I confess I was mortified to find, that brave officers, whose eminent services I had strongly and faithfully represented, were not rewarded at home with the distinction expected for them by the army in general, as well as by me. It were a matter of small moment if the evil went no farther than to my personal mortification : but if it be true that the spirit of military men is raised or depressed by the conferring or withholding of their sovereign's substantial approbation, such slights may prove of very dangerous tendency.

The noble Lord, on a former day, thought proper to treat my recommendation of Captain Emmerrick with a certain air of contempt and ridicule. He had forgot, it should seem, that he himself sent Captain Emmerrick to America, and, in the very extraordinary terms contained in his Lordship's letter of the 25th of April, 1776, originally recommended him to my attention. His Lordship best knows the purpose for which he sent him out, and whether he was a proper person to raise a body of men, or to be trusted with money for such a service.

When I received my orders to return home, as soon as Sir Henry Clinton should arrive at Philadelphia, I confess I became cautious of hazarding exploits which might have reduced the army of my successor, though a fair opportunity happening to present itself, I did make one attempt, which, had it succeeded, would have proved a severe stroke upon the enemy. Upon the whole, I flatter myself it will be found, that I made no disadvantageous use of the army under my command, and that I never made deceitful representations of the situation of affairs, but freely communicated my sentiments upon the force necessary to suppress the rebellion : and I am to this hour confident that if sufficient re-inforcements had been sent from hence, and the plan of operations which I took upon me to propose, had been adopted in its proper extent, the war in North America would now have wore a very different aspect.

I have heard it has been said, that my civil commission was inconsistent with my military command—and that my mind was more intent upon bringing about a peace by negotiation, than by  
force



force of arms. Sir, thinking it my first duty, I certainly should have preferred the former mode of conciliation, and my brother and I for that purpose did go to the utmost verge of our very limited commission and instructions. But our proceeding in the character of Commissioners never for one moment suspended our military operations. We soon saw that the leaders of the rebellion were determined, from interest, if not from principle, to prevent a reconciliation with Great-Britain, and therefore our joint endeavours were invariably exerted in the prosecution of the war, to as great an extent as the force in our hands would permit.

The reflection, that the civil and the military commission were incompatible, has, I know, been applied particularly to my conduct. I boldly assert it to be ill-founded, as I am certain I never delayed to seize an opportunity of attacking the enemy, consistently with my duty of weighing the risk of ruining the cause I was engaged in by a considerable loss of troops : and indeed those who are acquainted with my commission and instructions, as a Commissioner of peace, must know, that from the restrictions they contained, it was next to an impossibility, that my military could materially interfere with my civil duty.

I have trespassed, I fear, too long upon the patience of the Committee—The great importance of the subject, and the detail of facts, I have been necessarily led into, will, I hope, plead my apology. I shall trouble you with but a word more; in support of the measure of proceeding to Philadelphia. Before I came from thence, I had every reason to be perfectly satisfied of the advantages that would have ensued from that operation, if the councils at home had thought the Post proper to be preserved. The inhabitants in general of the province of Pennsylvania, those of the lower counties on Delaware, and those of the lower part of Jersey, were forward to return to their allegiance, and even to assist offensively in compelling his Majesty's revolted subjects to their duty. This favourable disposition, however did not appear immediately—An equivocal neutrality was all I at first experienced; our successes and apparent ability to retain our advantages, induced the inhabitants at last to be less reserved. Secret intelligence, which, until that period, had been extremely  
difficult



difficult to procure, was then so good, and so readily obtained, that I could not but attribute it to the possession of Philadelphia, which convinced the country of the superiority, and persuaded them of the established power, of his Majesty's arms. The difficulties of the Congress, in raising supplies; and in recruiting Mr. Washington's army, then indeed became real, and had the appearance of being unsurmountable. But the French treaty, and our orders to evacuate Philadelphia, by which measure the protection of his Majesty's forces was to be withdrawn from the province, made a sudden and melancholy change in our affairs. The rebels were inspired with fresh hopes; the friends of government were dismayed.—But it is not my intention to animadvert upon orders sent from hence after my recall, nor upon the future prospects of the war.—My view is merely to justify my own conduct during the time I was honoured with the command (*a*).

This Narrative has, I fear, been too prolix; but the subject was so complicated with matter, and the circumstances necessary to be brought into a clear point of view, were so numerous, that brevity would not have been consistent with perspicuity. Had I laboured to make my Narrative short, it would have been obscure. Sensible as I am of the great attention and indulgence with which the Committee has honoured me, I now hasten to the conclusion.

The Secretary of State, as appears in his letters, has signified in the most flattering expressions, his Majesty's approbation of every material part of my conduct, during the whole of my command. His Lordship's own personal applause is also very warmly conveyed throughout his correspondence; all his letters

F

however,

(*a*) Mr. Joseph Galloway, in his evidence to the Committee of the House of Commons, positively asserts, that I advised him, and the other magistrates, to go over to Washington and make their peace. The truth is, as soon as it was known that orders were arrived for the evacuation of Philadelphia. Mr. Galloway came to me on behalf of himself and the other magistrates, and requested my advice and assistance concerning the measures to be adopted for their welfare. I assured him, that if they chose to go with the King's army, they should be taken all possible care of; but if they rather chose to stay behind with their property and families, I could have no objection to their enquiring previously whether Washington and the Congress would grant them protection and security.

however, may with propriety be said to have been private letters, until they were laid before this House. The knowledge of the approbation they contained was confined within his Lordship's breast and mine. When calumny first became busy with my reputation, I could have wished his Lordship's sentiments more generally known:—though it would not perhaps have become me to have obtruded upon the world those official declarations in my own favour. But I must ever think it would have been an ingenuous, an honourable, and a liberal part in the noble Lord to have avowed, openly in parliament, the approbation, which it is to be presumed he was convinced I deserved, because he had advised the King to bestow it. Such a conduct would have stopped the current of ill-founded accusation against me. Such a conduct would have secured to himself the confidence, and to his country the chearful services, of future Generals.

And now, Sir, having endeavoured to bring before you, by the most impartial quotations, all the evidence that I thought necessary to collect from the papers on your table, I shall only remind you, that the House has ordered the attendance of several of the most respectable officers who served in America during my command. Their testimony may confirm the truth of the facts I have advanced, and will undoubtedly explain and prove any other material circumstances, which you may think necessary for your investigation.

And, Sir, if the House of Commons, or any other individual member, shall have any charge or accusation to make against me, I declare myself ready and willing to meet it. The Committee is open for the reception of any other papers, and for the examination of any other witnesses. My only wish is, that every possible light may be thrown upon every part of my conduct.

I move that Earl Cornwallis be called in.

O B S E R V A T I O N S

U P O N

A P A M P H L E T

ENTITLED

LETTERS TO A NOBLEMAN.





---

# O B S E R V A T I O N S

U P O N

## A P A M P H L E T, &c.

**T**HE Author of LETTERS TO A NOBLEMAN, upon whose invidious assertions I mean to make some observations, opens his pamphlet against me with a comparison between the present and the last war in America.

Without meaning to depreciate the great services of former Commanders, I must take leave to say, that the two wars, with respect to the state of the country of America, are in no degree similar. In the last war, the difficulties arising from the strength of the country were, for the most part removed by the friendly disposition of the inhabitants, who always exerted themselves to facilitate the operations of the King's army, and to supply them with every necessary and accommodation.

In the present war, these circumstances are reversed ; and yet the author attempts to persuade his reader, that " the strength " or impracticability of America is lost in idea, when we compare it with the scene of action in the last American war."

Because the British troops were always superior to the rebels in discipline, and frequently in numbers, he is unwilling to allow them any merit in the victories they obtained ; for he  
denies

denies that they had strength of country to contend against.  
 “ That part of the middle colonies (says he page 2d) which has  
 “ been the scene of the late military operations, cannot, with  
 “ the least propriety, in the military sense of the words,  
 “ be called uncommonly strong; and much less impracti-  
 “ cable.”

This assertion is in direct opposition to the opinions of Earl Cornwallis, Major General Grey, and every military man I ever conversed with on the subject, who have been eye-witnesses, and serving in this war.

Major-General Grey's evidence upon this point to the House of Commons, is as follows:

Q. “ Is not the country in general so covered with wood,  
 “ and so favourable to ambuscades, that but an imperfect know-  
 “ ledge of it can be obtained by reconnoitering ?”

A. “ That part of America where I had been, is the  
 “ strongest country I ever was in; it is every where hilly, and  
 “ covered with wood—intersected by ravines, creeks, and marshy  
 “ grounds, and in every quarter of a mile is a post fitted for  
 “ ambuscades. Little or no knowledge could be obtained by  
 “ reconnoitering.”

Q. “ Do you know any country, considering the circum-  
 “ stances of the American war, so well calculated for the de-  
 “ fensive ?”

A. “ My answer to the former question certainly shews, that  
 “ America is, of all countries, the best calculated for the de-  
 “ fensive. Every one hundred yards might be disputed; at  
 “ least that part of which I have seen.”

I shall now proceed with my remarks upon the pamphlet, page by page.

Page 3d.] *In this country, we have lately seen two armies, one meditating its conquest, the other its defence. We have seen the British army penetrating into its heart, in a circuit of near two hundred miles, from Long-Island, by the White Plains, to Trenton, and from the Elk Ferry to Philadelphia, in defiance of the utmost efforts*

*efforts of an enemy perfectly acquainted with every advantageous spot of ground ; and we have seen that army taking, with ease, and little loss, every strong post possessed by the enemy, who have always fled at its approach.*

This description is introduced to shew that the country is not *very strong and impracticable*. But it only proves, that the Generals, and officers commanding the several corps, were indefatigable in their duty, and surmounted all the difficulties of country which they met with in those marches. The author certainly did not mean to pay me any compliment. The commander in Chief, however, will be supposed to have had some share in the merit of these successes—But it is not true, that *the enemy always fled at our approach*, nor that we took all their strong posts *with ease and little loss*. They fought the King's army on Long-Island ; they sustained the attack at Fort Washington ; they stood the battle of Brandywine ; and our loss upon those occasions, though by no means equal to their's, was not inconsiderable.

Page 7, 8, &c.] *These pages contain a dissertation upon the loyalty of the people of America.*

Much might be said upon the state of loyalty, and the principles of loyalty, in America. Some are loyal from principle ; many from interest ; many from resentment ; many wish for peace, but are indifferent which side prevails ; and there are others who wish success to Great-Britain, from a recollection of the happiness they enjoyed under her government. In the course of these remarks I shall have occasion to treat this subject more at large.

Page 8.] *Neglect and inhuman treatment which his Majesty's faithful subjects received.*

I am at a loss to know what species of neglect, or inhuman treatment, is here meant. Plundering is particularly stated in another part of the pamphlet, and shall be there answered. Upon this general accusation, however, I cannot help making some remarks.—I am contented that strictures should be made upon my



professional conduct; but I feel myself hurt as a man, when I am accused of inhumanity.

The first distresses to the Americans, in consequence of the rebellion, commenced in Boston; and I believe it impossible to give one instance of inhumanity towards any individual in that place. The utmost attention was, on the contrary, extended, not only to those whose conduct gave them a claim to public protection, but to all who made even the slightest professions, or assumed the appearance, of loyalty. It is upon record (Proclamation of 28th October, 1775) that their services were courted, by recommending a defensive association, and that arms were offered to all, who would declare themselves willing to contribute their assistance in the preservation of good order and government within the town of Boston: those, who enrolled themselves upon this occasion, were supplied with fuel and provisions equal to the allowance issued to his majesty's troops. A similar regard was continued to the refugees upon the evacuation of Boston (when the army was in the most perilous circumstances, as well from a scarcity of provisions as of transport tonnage) by carrying to Halifax above 1100 men, women, and children, with as much of their merchandize and effects as could be removed. Does this treatment come under the description of inhumanity?—The circumstances I have mentioned are upon record in my letters to Lord George Germain of the 21st of March, and 25th of April, 1776.

At every other period of my command at New-York, at Philadelphia, was there a man, having a just claim to notice, and offering his active services, who was not employed? Many were provided for in civil departments; many received pecuniary reliefs; nor do I recollect a refugee (properly recommended to me) who was not offered military service, civil employment, money, provisions, accommodations, or some mark of public attention. It is true that I particularly distinguished (as I had a right to do) those from whom I had reason to expect more essential services; and I confess that I sometimes found myself the dupe of such distinctions.



Of this I shall state one particular instance.—*Joseph Galloway* Esq. (a lawyer by profession) had been formerly Speaker of the Assembly of Pennsylvania. This gentleman, in the beginning of the rebellion, was elected a member of Congress. When my Brother and I, in the Character of his Majesty's Commissioners for restoring Peace, published a Proclamation of indemnity for all those who had taken part in the rebellion, provided they should surrender themselves, and subscribe a declaration of allegiance, within a limited time, *Mr. Galloway* was amongst the first who came over to us from Philadelphia. This was in the month of December, 1776, when our great successes had intimidated the leaders of the rebellion, and nearly induced a general submission. Notwithstanding so favourable a prospect of affairs, I considered the acquisition of *Mr. Galloway* as a matter of some importance, because in all events I expected much assistance from a gentleman of his abilities and reputed influence in the province of Pennsylvania. This expectation will, I hope, in some degree justify my liberality towards him. I allowed him at the rate of 200*l.* sterling per annum from the time of his joining the army until he could be otherwise provided for. When we had taken possession of Philadelphia, I appointed him a Magistrate of the police of that city, with a salary made up 300*l.* sterling per annum, and six shillings a day more, for a clerk. I also appointed him Superintendent of the Port, with a salary of twenty shillings a day, making in the whole upwards of 770*l.* sterling per annum. Had his popularity, or personal influence in Pennsylvania, been as great as he pretended it was, I should not have thought this money ill bestowed. I at first paid attention to his opinions, and relied upon him for procuring me secret intelligence; but I afterwards found that my confidence was misplaced. His ideas, I discovered, to be visionary, and his intelligence was too frequently either ill-founded, or so much exaggerated, that it would have been unsafe to act upon it. Having once detected him in sending me a piece of intelligence from a person, who afterwards, upon examination, gave a very different account of the matter, I immediately changed the channel of secret communication, and in future considered *Mr. Galloway* as a nugatory informer. I continued him, however, in his lucrative offices of

G

Magistrate

Magistrate of the police, and Superintendent of the port, in the duties of which I believe he was not deficient.

*Pages 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.] The author in these pages says, that the British army, wherever they marched, were received with every mark of gladness, and particularly in Philadelphia—that during our possession of Philadelphia the people of the country, at the risque of their lives, supplied the army, navy, and the inhabitants of the city, consisting of not less than 50,000 souls, with every kind of provision—that they refused those supplies to the rebel general, rather than be the instruments of aiding the enemies of their sovereign—that they came in from all quarters to give intelligence of the state of the enemy, and of the good disposition of the people towards government---that many thousands came over to the British troops for protection, or concealed themselves in distant provinces, where they were unknown; or took refuge among the savages, to avoid entering into the war against their fellow-subjects in this country, and at the same time thousands of them in arms as volunteers served in their behalf without receiving pay or clothing,*

I know not, nor ever heard, that the British troops, wherever they marched, and particularly in Philadelphia, were received with gladness, except by the Quakers, and a very few other persons. Upon the arrival of the army at Philadelphia, there were not quite 4,500 male inhabitants between eighteen and sixty years of age remaining in that city. By degrees they came in, some to get possession of their houses and effects---some to do us all the mischief they could, by sending out intelligence to the enemy, inveigling the troops to desert, and smvggling such supplies for Washington's army as could not be purchased in the country. That the people of the country brought in fresh provisions to us, and refused such supplies, as much as they dared, to the rebel General, is certain; but I do not admit that this conduct proceeded from the motives ascribed to it by the author. The people of the country had no opinion of the value of Congress paper money, and the rebel General compelled them to take that in payment for the supplies he collected. But they knew they should receive instantly hard money for every thing they should bring to us; and they had also the opportunity of carrying  
back

E 230

H 834

No. 0137-N. 10  
55



2

back with them, for the use of their families, a variety of necessary articles, that could only be had in those places which were possessed by the British army and navy. These, I apprehend, were the real motives of all that sort of assistance which we procured from the country people. The author says they did this at the *risque of their lives*. There was in fact that appearance, and I regularly sent out considerable detachments to protect the ingress and regress of the people on market days; but I always suspected that General Washington, through policy, connived at this kind of commerce. He knew that neither our army nor our navy were ever in distress for provisions: he knew that distress, if any, would fall upon the inhabitants, who were in general his friends; he knew that an influx of gold and silver was strengthening his country in a most important point; and he knew that the people, whether he should connive at the practice or not, would carry their produce wherever they could get gold and silver in payment.

*Many thousands (the author says) concealed themselves in distant provinces where they were unknown, or took refuge amongst the savages, to avoid entering into the war.*

If by this he means (as I presume he must) the insurgents of *North Carolina*, the reader will find the circumstances respecting them related in a subsequent remark.

*Many thousands (he says) came over to the British troops for protection.*

I aver, that at no time did men in numbers come over to the British troops, although there was a prospect of that happening in the spring of 1778, which I attributed to our success in taking, and retaining possession of, Philadelphia.

What the author means by thousands of *volunteers* in arms, without receiving pay or clothing, I know not. I know that of the whole number of the men in our provincial corps, only a small proportion were Americans.

Soon after the arrival of the army in Philadelphia, *Mr. Galloway* applied to me for permission to raise a troop of dragoons, which

which he assured me should be composed of natives of America, and chiefly from the county of Bucks in Pennsylvania, where he pretended to have (for he certainly had not) great influence. His request was granted; and afterwards, upon examination, it turned out that very few of the men he did raise were Americans.

To prove my opinion of the loyalty of the people, the author, in a note (page 24) quotes a passage in my letter of the 3d of September, 1776, to the secretary of state, wherein I say, that “the inhabitants of Long-Island, many of whom *had been forced into the rebellion*, have all *submitted*, and are ready to take the oaths of allegiance.”

My information, that many of the inhabitants of Long-Island had been forced into the rebellion, came from the Governor of the province; and it is true, that after our success there the inhabitants did submit; but it appeared in the sequel, that their submission proceeded from no other motive, than that of our success, a few of them entered into our battalions then raising upon Long-Island. The word *submitted*, in my letter, implies a degree of compulsion.

The author (in the same note) endeavouring to shew, that I thought the people not inclined to the rebellion, quotes the following words in my public letter of the 12th of February, 1777. “They (the Rebel States) conscious that their whole stake depends upon the success of the next campaign, use *every compulsory means* to those who do not enter *voluntarily* into their service.” He also quotes my letter of the 5th of March, 1778, to the like effect.

The *compulsory means*, to which I said the Rebel States were reduced, was in fact the consequence of the success of the British arms. The Americans would not *voluntarily* enter into that army, which, whenever it met our's, was almost certain of being defeated. If the aversion which the Americans shewed to enter into the rebel army proceeded from loyalty to their Sovereign, why did not that body of 500 men, which the author asserts (but which I do not believe) were, in September 1777, dismissed by General Washington, because they were too much attached to the



the British government, why did not that body, when so dismissed, at the distance of a very few miles from our army, take an opportunity of offering their services to us ?

Page 33.] *The foot and cavalry sent over to America amounted to 52,815—of that number 40,874 were under the command of Sir William Howe.*

The author would here impress the reader with an opinion, that at the time of my arrival at Staten-Island, my army amounted to 40,874, and the rebel army to 18,000, militia included. Nothing can be more fallacious than this account.—When I landed upon Staten-Island I had under my immediate command, including sick, only 7,556 rank and file. I landed upon Long-Island with between 15 and 16,000 rank and file, having left the remainder of the army for the defence of Staten-Island ; my whole force at that time consisted of 20,121 rank and file, of which 1,677 were sick.

Page 34.] *When Sir William Howe arrived at Staten-Island, the resolution of Congress, recommending independence to the colonies, had just passed, &c.*

*The Rebel force which had been seduced into arms, under a pretence of obtaining a redress of grievances, did not amount to 18,000 men, militia included.*

*Having thus before us the number of troops of both parties, it is necessary, to a further elucidation of the truth, to take a comparative view of the real force of each in the military balance.*

The rebels, from the best information I could obtain, had then, in that part of the country, upwards of 20,000—they were called 24,000—I mean upon Long-Island and York-Island only, exclusive of what they called their flying camp in the neighbourhood (in the Jerseys) said to consist of 8,000. If I were to follow the author's mode of computation when he states the number of men under my command, I should say, and from better authority, that General Washington had under his command

mand, in May 1776, in the several provinces, an army of 80,000 Men (a)

Page 35.] *The rebel army were neglected in their health, and undisciplined.*

The truth is, that instead of being neglected in their health, they had the most eminent of the faculty in America to attend them, and had regular established hospitals. With regard to their discipline, they had as good use of fire-arms, in general, as the King's troops, great pains having been taken to train their men ever since the year 1774.

Page 35.] *Another matter, which has long been a question with the publick, ought to be cleared up—I mean, whether the General commanding the British troops has been confined by peremptory instructions, which weakened his operations, and obstructed the great design of the war.—The letters of the American Secretaries of State prove, that he was left to his own judgement in forming and executing his plans in every instance, except one (d), which he unfortunately neglected, and by that neglect sacrificed a British army, and involved his country in a degree of disgrace it never before had experienced.*

(d) *These instructions, (the author says) were, to support the northern army, and to make a diversion in its favour on the New-England coasts.—Lord George Germain's letter, 3d March, 1777.*

I never complained of being confined by peremptory instructions. My operations were weakened, and the great design of

(a) *A Return of the Rebel Strength in May, 1776, printed at New-York, was thus :*

In Canada, on the lakes, and at Albany	-	9,000 Continental.
At New-York and Long-Island.		{ 12,000 Ditto.
		{ 11,000 Militia.
		{ 3,300 Jersey brigade.
In Jersey and Pennsylvania	-	10,000 Flying Camp.
In Virginia	-	8,000 Continental.
North-Carolina	-	1,000 Ditto.
South-Carolina	-	4,000 Ditto.
At Boston	-	2,000 Ditto.
Not then stationed.	-	20,000 Militia.
Total.		<hr/> 80,300

of the war was obstructed, by a want of sufficient force, as I have explained at large in my Narrative. The author here quotes Lord George Germain's letter of the 3d of March, 1777, as containing instructions *to support the northern army*, although in fact it makes no mention whatsoever of that army. The only instructions (if they can be so called) which I ever received concerning the northern army, are contained in his Lordship's letter to me of the 18th of May 1777, which I did not receive till the 16th of August, when I was up Chesapeake-Bay—the words are these; “trusting however that whatever you may meditate, it “will be executed in time for you to co-operate with the army “ordered to proceed from Canada, and put itself under your “command.”—I have spoken to this in my Narrative (page 24).

In the letter of the 3d of March (referred to by the author) I am informed that it is his Majesty's opinion, that “a warm “diversion upon the coasts of Massachusetts-Bay and New-Hampshire would not only impede the levies for the continental army, but tend much to the security of our trade,”—and Lord Howe and I are ordered to “take this matter into our “serious consideration, so far as my intended plan (the expedition to Pennsylvania) will admit.”—In my answer to Lord George Germain of the 3d of June following, I gave my reasons why that diversion could not be made—This subject is discussed in my Narrative (page 12). And here I will only farther observe, that the diversion proposed, in Lord George's letter, does not profess to have any reference to the northern army.

Page 36.] *The Commander in Chief never began his operations till the month of June. A part of that month, and the whole of April and May, when the season is moderate, most proper for action, and the roads are good, were wantonly wasted; while a variety of the most cogent motives pointed to an early and vigorous campaign.*

I have the opening of two campaigns to account for.

On the 2d of July 1776 I landed at Staten-Island, from Halifax. Our operations were not expected to commence before the arrival of the troops from England, or of General Clinton's army from Charles-Town. General Clinton arrived the 1st of August.

The



The Guards and Hessians, with the camp equipage, arrived the 12th of August. Nine days only were allotted to the refreshment of the troops after the great length of time they had been on board their transports, and for making all necessary arrangements. We landed on Long-Island the 22d of August. This was the opening of the first campaign, 1776, nor could it possibly have been opened sooner.

The second campaign in 1777 is next to be accounted for.—The expedition to Peek's-Kill took place so nearly as the 22d of March. The expedition to Danbury on the 23d of April. The camp equipage for the army did not arrive till the 24th of May. Our operations in the Jerseys began the 12th of June. My letters to the Secretary of State contain sufficient reasons why these operations could not take place sooner.

Page 37.] *In these months (April and May) the rebel army was always reduced to its weakest state.*

*It was in the months of April and May that recruits for the rebel army were chiefly procured, who never could join it before the month of June.*

They recruited, as all other armies do, in the winter; and their levies joined them early in spring. In summer their recruiting parties were in the field.

Page 38.] *He knew that dry forage was much more hearty food for his horses than green; that he might have carried the same forage with him for a time, which sustained him in their quarters; that the country was full of dry forage of every kind; and that he had ever obtained it when he stood in need of it, whether in the field or in his quarters (f).*

(f) Sir W. H.—'s letter of the 17th of Jan. 1778. Lord Cornwallis procures 'from the country, forage sufficient for the winter consumption.'

We had not forage in quarters, nor could we have carried any quantity for essential service.

His reference to my letter of 17th of January, 1778, is of a piece with the rest of his performance. The forage therein  
spoken

spoken of was procured in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, at the beginning of the winter. But though every means was exerted, we could not procure a sufficient quantity of forage; and we should have been much distressed in that article, if Lord Howe had not conveyed to us a considerable supply from Rhode-Island.

But what connection is there between the state of forage at Philadelphia in the year 1778, and the opening of the campaign in Jersey in 1777? The author is peculiarly expert in anachronism, and has, in some instances, not only transposed dates, but combined the circumstances of different periods, for the sake of strengthening, or applying them to, a particular point of time.

Of the opening of the campaign 1777, I have already spoken. It is not necessary for me to say much of 1778.—Very early in April I received my orders to return home—The conduct, therefore, of the campaign of 1778 was to rest upon my successor. The army, however, was not *indolent or dissipated* in that interval.—In the month of March I detached Colonel Mawhood to make a descent on the coast of Jersey. He defeated the force collected against him, and brought off a large and seasonable supply of forage.—Colonel Abercrombie was no less successful in surprising, and entirely defeating, a corps of near a thousand of the rebels, who had taken post about seventeen miles from Philadelphia. This service was performed on the 4th of May; and on the 7th of May Major Maitland, with Capt. Henry of the navy, proceeded up the Delaware, to destroy the rebel ships and vessels between Philadelphia and Trenton, an enterprize very ably conducted, and effectually executed.—Sir Henry Clinton arrived at Philadelphia on the 8th, and on the 24th of the same month I resigned to him the command of the army.

Page 38.] *He saw repeated attempts made by bodies of men to form themselves in arms, and to assist him in suppressing the Rebellion.*

The only attempt of this kind worth mentioning happened in North-Carolina, in the spring of 1776, when it was absolutely impossible for me to give assistance to the insurrection. The plan was concerted between a settlement of Highland emigrants, and

H

a body

a body of Americans in that province, distinguished by the name of Loyalists. They engaged to obey the orders of Governor Martin, who proposed they should operate in favour of the troops from Europe under Earl Cornwallis. The Loyalists promised 5000, the Highlanders 700, men. The former insisted upon their assembling immediately; the latter urged the expediency of waiting the arrival of the British troops, but yielded to the importunity of the Loyalists, and repaired in arms to the rendezvous, stronger than the stipulated complement. The Loyalists, instead of 5000, did not assemble a twentieth part of that number, and two companies of these deserted, upon the near approach of the rebels. The Highlanders stood their ground, and fought bravely, but being overpowered, were defeated with considerable loss, and forced to disperse.

Page 38.] *He saw many of the inhabitants fined, imprisoned, and suffer death itself on account of their loyalty (g).*

(g) *Sir William Howe's letters prove the truths I have endeavoured to support.—In that dated the 8th of June, 1776, he says, he landed his troops to the great joy of a most faithful and loyal people.—That he has great reason to expect a numerous body of the inhabitants to join the army from the provinces of New-York, the Jerseys, and Connecticut; who, in this time of universal oppression, only wait for opportunities to give proofs of their loyalty and zeal for government.*

The letter, which the author here quotes as dated the 8th of June, is dated the 7th of July, 1776, from Staten-Island. The few inhabitants of this place had been averse from the violent measures adopted by their neighbours, and in consequence ill-treated by the people of Jersey. The arrival of the King's troops relieved them from future apprehensions; and they testified their loyalty by all the means in their power. They furnished us with fresh provisions, carriages, horses, &c. at that time, therefore they merited the description I gave them in my letter. But it should be remembered, that it was only the people of Staten-Island I spoke of. The campaign not having begun, I could have no personal knowledge of the loyalty of the people of New-York, the Jerseys, or Connecticut. At Sandy Hook I had met Governor Tryon, and some other gentlemen, who had taken refuge on board ship, and from them only could I receive information



mation of the disposition of the people of those provinces.—The event proved, that they were too sanguine in their expectations.

Page 39.] *As another proof of my opinion of the great loyalty of the Americans, he adds in a note the following quotation from my letter to the Secretary of State, dated 20th Dec. 1776.*

*‘ The chain of cantonments is rather too extensive, but I was induced to occupy Burlington, to cover the county of Monmouth, in which there are many loyal inhabitants.’*

This letter was written before the affair of Trenton, and I could have no reason to suspect the fidelity of those who came in to us from Monmouth; but I was soon undeceived. Many, very many, of these Loyalists, were a short time afterwards taken in arms against us, and others killed with my protections in their pockets. In the pockets of the killed, and prisoners, were also found certificates of those very men having subscribed a declaration of allegiance, in consequence of the Proclamation of the King’s Commissioners for a general indemnity.—These are notorious facts.

Page 39.] *And yet, contrary to these proofs, he, with many of his General officers, affected to believe them, and have since declared, that the people of that country were almost unanimously disaffected to the Crown. Under this pretence we have seen him decline to entrust the faithful and loyal subjects with arms, or to make use of the well-affected force in the colonies, to assist him in reducing, or in defending, after reduced, either cities or provinces.*

Various offers of raising men were made to me, nor did I decline any of those offers that brought with them the least prospect of success; but I must add, that very few of them were fulfilled in the extent proposed.

*Mr. Oliver Delancey, who was reputed to be the most likely man in New-York, to induce the Loyalists of that province*

to join the King's troops, was appointed a Brigadier-General, and authorised to raise three Battalions, to consist of 1500 privates, placing at the head of each the most respectable characters, recommended as such by himself, and by Governor Tryon. Every possible effort was used by those gentlemen, not only in the districts possessed by the King's troops, but by employing persons to go through the country, and invite the well-affected to come in. Several of the officers (as I have since been informed) anxious to complete their corps, fought for recruits, even amongst the prisoners, who were then very numerous, and ventured to hold out to them the temptations of pay, liberty, and pardon. Notwithstanding all these efforts and encouragements : notwithstanding the *loyalty* of the people, and the *many thousand flying over to the British troops for protection* (as asserted by the author) Brigadier-General Delancey, at the opening of the campaign 1777, instead of 1,500, had only raised 597.

*Mr. Courtland Skinner*, who was acknowledged to possess considerable influence in the Jerseys, where he had served the office of Attorney-General with great integrity and reputation, was also appointed a Brigadier-General, and authorised to raise five Battalions, to consist of 2,500 privates, under the command of gentlemen of the country, nominated by himself. The same efforts were made as for the raising of Delancey's corps ; but at the opening of the campaign 1777, Brigadier General Skinner's numbers amounted only to 517, towards his expected five Battalions of 2,500.

In November, 1777, Brigadier-General Delancey's corps increased to 693, and Brigadier-General Skinner's to 859.—In May, 1778 their progress was so slow, that the first had only advanced to 707, the latter to 1101.

Several other corps were offered to be raised, and were accepted, in the winter of 1776, making in the whole thirteen, to consist of 6,500 men, including the Brigades of Delancey and Skinner. But in May 1778, the whole number in all these thirteen corps amounted only to 3,609, little more than half the promised complement, and of

these (as I have before observed) only a small proportion were Americans.

Upon our taking possession of Philadelphia, the same, and indeed greater encouragements were held out to the people of Pennsylvania.—*Mr. William Allen*, a gentleman who was supposed to have great family influence in that province—*Mr. Chalmers*, much respected in the three Lower Counties on Delaware, and in Maryland—and *Mr. Clifton*, the chief of the Roman Catholic persuasion, of whom there were said to be many in Philadelphia, as well as in the rebel army, serving against their inclinations: These gentlemen were appointed Commandants of corps, to receive, and form for service, all the well-affected that could be obtained—And what was the success of these efforts? In May, 1778, when I left America, Colonel Allen had raised only 152 rank and file—Colonel Chalmers 336—and Colonel Clifton 180; which, together with three Troops of light dragoons, consisting of 132 troopers, and 174 *real volunteers* from Jersey, under Colonel Vandyke, amounting in the whole to 974 men, constituted all the force that could be collected in Pennsylvania, after the most indefatigable exertions, during eight months.

Page 39.] *When he passed through New Jersey, and drove the panic struck rebels out of that country, no step was taken to embody and arm the friends of government, who were ready and anxious to be employed, in disarming the disaffected, in restoring the province to his Majesty's peace, and in defending it when the army should proceed in its other necessary operations.*

I never heard before of the *readiness* and *anxiety* here expressed—nor could I—for that part of New Jersey through which Earl Cornwallis marched, from Fort Lee to Trenton, was almost destitute of male inhabitants, a few excepted, who remained to fire, from behind bushes, upon the King's troops as they passed. The idea of employing people of this description, in *disarming the disaffected, in restoring the province to peace, and in defending it* when the army should proceed in its other operations, is too glaringly absurd to deserve farther comment.



Page 40.] *In Philadelphia where a militia might have been framed sufficient, with the assistance of 1000 regulars, and a few vessels of war, to have defended it against any force that could have been brought against it, while the British army was operating against the main body of the rebel army, there was the same unpardonable omission, although he remained in that city near nine months.*

What I have before said, concerning the success of our endeavours to raise troops at Philadelphia, might be deemed a sufficient answer to this paragraph. But it may be more satisfactory, to give the reader an exact return of the number of inhabitants remaining within the city of Philadelphia, the Northern Liberties, and District of Southwark, in October, 1777, taken from an exact list made out in the separate wards, under the direction of Mr. Galloway.

Males under 18 years of age	-	-	4941
Ditto above 18, and under 60	-	-	4482
		Total males	9423
Females of all ages	-	-	12,344
		Total	21,767

Whether a militia, formed from the above, could contribute to the defence of the city, is submitted; and to make the conclusion as easy as possible, I shall state a very strong fact, to shew how far the inhabitants were *anxious* to promote the King's service, *even without carrying arms.*

As soon as we were in possession of Philadelphia, my intention was to fortify it in such manner, as that it might be tenable by a small number of men, whilst the main army should keep the field, and act against General Washington. To effectuate this purpose, I sent orders from German Town to the chief Engineer, to construct redoubts, and to form the necessary lines of communication. That the work might be expedited, and the labour of the soldiers spared, I, at the same time, directed him to employ the inhabitants, and pay them 8d. *per diem*, besides

besides a ration of salt provisions each, without which, I was convinced they could not have been persuaded to have worked at all.

Mr. Galloway, whom I had previously talked with upon the subject, had assured me there would be no difficulty in finding 500 men for this business; and I presumed he exerted himself to fulfil the expectations he had given me. But with all the assiduity of that gentleman, and all the means made use of by the chief Engineer, the whole number that could be prevailed upon to handle the pick-axe and spade, for the construction of the redoubts and abbatis, amounted, each day, upon an average, to no more than between seventy and eighty.

Page 41.] *Did he take one step which tended to reconcile the people to his Majesty's interests and government; or to bring them back to their former allegiance, although he had a commission and instructions for that purpose?*

Every step was taken for these purposes, and the measures pursued by my Brother and me, in the execution of our civil commission, were approved by the King's Minister. Our instructions have not yet been made public, and therefore it would be improper to discuss them in this place.

Page 41.] *Although he saw the people in different parts of the country, making every effort in their power to assist him; yet we find in all his proclamations, an injunction on them to remain peaceably in their habitations, without the least invitation to take up arms in behalf of the Crown, or the smallest intimation, that their assistance would accord with his wishes. An injunction which amounted, in effect, to a prohibition, and rendered it dangerous, if not unlawful, for them to act otherwise, because a strict obedience to it was the only condition upon which he promised them his Majesty's protection.*

I have already described the efforts and assistance of the people in different parts of the country.

Many

Many of my Proclamations contained invitations to arms; and promises of large encouragements. The author here perhaps meant to allude to one particular Declaration, which I issued when the army landed at the head of Elk. I shall subjoin a copy of that declaration, which will prove how invidiously he has mis-quoted it.

As to his suggestion, that the injunction, for the people to remain peaceably in their habitations, amounted to a prohibition against their taking up arms in behalf of the Crown, and rendered it *dangerous*, if not *unlawful* for them to do so, because *a strict obedience to the declaration was the only condition upon which I promised them his Majesty's protection*; this I think, is a quibble, which would never have entered the head of an *English Lawyer*.

As this Declaration was calculated for the meridian of Pennsylvania, of the people of which province *Mr. Galloway* professed an intimate knowledge, I consulted him previously upon it; I framed it agreeably to his ideas; when written, it had his full approbation.

*Mr. Galloway* assured me, that the inhabitants of that part of the country would come in to us. Soon after our landing, I complained to him of my disappointment in that particular.—He returned for answer, that the people were not so well affected in that part of the country as they were farther on; and that I should find them more and more loyal, as I advanced towards the Capital of Pennsylvania. This information, however, proved equally false. Through the whole march of the army, from the Head of Elk to Philadelphia, the male inhabitants, fit to bear arms (a very few excepted) had deserted their dwellings, and I had great reason to believe, were in arms against us. The Quakers were the only people against whom I entertained no suspicion.



## D E C L A R A T I O N.

SIR WILLIAM HOWE, regretting the calamities, to which many of his Majesty's faithful subjects are still exposed, by the continuance of the rebellion, and no less desirous of protecting the innocent, than determined to pursue with the rigours of war all those; whom his Majesty's forces, in the course of their progress, may find in arms against the King, doth hereby assure the peaceable inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania, the Lower Counties on Delaware, and the Counties of Maryland on the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay, that, in order to remove any groundless apprehensions, which may have been raised, of their suffering by depredations of the army under his command, he hath issued the strictest orders to his troops, for the preservation of regularity and good discipline; and has signified, that the most exemplary punishment shall be inflicted upon those, who shall dare to plunder the property, or molest the persons, of any of his Majesty's well-disposed subjects.

Security and protection are likewise extended to all persons, inhabitants of this Province, who, not guilty of having assumed legislative or judicial authority, may have acted illegally in subordinate stations, and, conscious of their misconduct, been induced to leave their dwellings, provided such persons do forthwith return, and remain peaceably at their usual places of abode.

Considering moreover, that many officers and private men now actually in arms against his Majesty, may be willing to relinquish the part they have taken in this rebellion, and return to their due allegiance: Sir William Howe doth, therefore, promise a free and general pardon to all such officers and private men, as shall voluntarily come and surrender themselves, to any detachment of his Majesty's Forces, before the day on which it shall be notified, that the said indulgence is to be discontinued.

Given under my Hand, at Head-Quarters of the Army,  
the 27th Day of August, 1777.

W. HOWE.

Page 42.] *Thousands came in wherever the army marched, and took the oath, but the Royal Faith, pledged for their safety, was shamefully violated. The unhappy people, instead of receiving the protection promised, were plundered by the soldiery. Their wives and daughters were violently polluted by the lustful brutality of the lowest of mankind; and friends and foes indiscriminately met with the same barbarian treatment.*

*If the British General was indolent and neglectful in putting a stop to these cruelties, the rebel commander and the new states were not so in converting them to their own benefit. Every possible advantage was taken of these enormities (h). Affidavits were taken of the plunder, and of every rape. They were published in all their newspapers, to irritate and enrage the people against his Majesty and the British nation. The British soldiers were represented as a race of men more inhuman than savages. By these means, the minds of many were turned against the British government, and many in desperation joined the rebel army. The force of the rebels was increased, the British weakened, and the humanity and glory of Britons received a disgraceful tarnish, which time can never efface.*

*This is a rhapsody calculated, alternately to freeze and fire the blood of the indignant reader, and my humanity, as well as my honour, is concerned in the refutation of its falsehood.*

*It may be remembered that, when this country began to grow impatient under the long continuation of the American war, (with a speedy termination of which the people had been repeatedly flattered, notwithstanding the contrary assurances the Secretary of State was possessed of from me) the most illiberal and unceasing attempts were made, to divert the public odium from the Minister to the General. One of the principal allegations against him, and against his Brother also, was, that they were too lenient, too discriminate towards the inhabitants of America. Severity, in its most savage extent, was held to be the only means of quelling the rebellion. The sufferings, even of the innocent, were to operate in our favour, by rendering them weary of the contest, and by exciting the multitude to submission. Such was the language of those times. But Major*

*General*

General Grey, in his evidence before the House of Commons, deposed, " that he never saw any degree of lenity shewn to the " Americans, but what was highly proper, and much to the " honour of the General and the British army."—The imputation of improper lenity having thus lost its weight, the charge is suddenly reversed.—*Major General Robertson* and *Mr. Galloway* are brought to say, that the inhabitants were plundered by the King's army, and (the enquiry in the House of Commons being hastily closed, so as to exclude the farther examination of witnesses on my part, who could have counterbalanced the weight of these and other allegations) the author of letters to a nobleman is instigated to alledge, that no lenity at all was shewn towards the people of America; but that on the contrary, every species of cruelty, at which the human minds revolts, was countenanced and encouraged.

*General Robertson* says, that the troops, as they passed through the Jerseys, plundered the inhabitants; but he also confesses, that *the commander in chief gave orders against it repeatedly*; and he might have added, that *Earl Cornwallis*, who commanded the army when they passed through the Jerseys, exerted himself to prevent that, and every other irregularity. Even *Mr. Galloway*, who in his evidence asserts that plunder was committed, acknowledges at the same time, that upon a memorial being presented, relative to the plunder of a large quantity of Madeira wine (which was one of the most flagrant instances) the matter was duly enquired into, and settled.

The author of letters to a nobleman well knows, that my general Orders, and my Proclamations, against plundering, were incessant; and in my conscience I believe, there never was less plundering, nor fewer enormities committed by any army, in the field, and where the inhabitants were in arms against the troops, than by that army which I had the honour to command. With regard to *the pollution of wives and daughters by the lustful brutality of the lowest of mankind*, I declare, that I do not recollect to have ever heard of more than one rape imputed to the soldiery, and that was said to have been committed in Chester county, in the province of New-York. The criminal was



secured; an enquiry immediately took place; but the accuser refused to prosecute.

It may be true (as the author asserts) that the Leaders of the rebellion circulated accounts of British barbarity in their newspapers. To irritate the Inhabitants against the King's authority and government was an invariable part of their system. The newspapers of America, like those of other countries, are the vehicles of invention and calumny, in support of party. But if such accounts had been founded in truth, complaints from the persons, or families injured, would probably have reached me; as they did not, I am persuaded the accounts were false.

That irregularities will sometimes be committed by a numerous army cannot be denied. All I contend for is, that, circumstances considered, they were few, and not of an enormous nature; that every means was used to prevent them; and the delinquents, when convicted, always punished in proportion to the offence.

Page 43.] *The suffering of the soldiers to plunder, and commit other outrages, was a dangerous relaxation of discipline. It rendered them avaritious, neglectful of their duty, and disobedient to command.*

That the King's troops in America were relaxed in discipline, negligent of their duty, and systematically disobedient to command, are allegations perfectly new, and, I will add, scandalously false, reflecting, without shadow of proof, upon the honour and conduct of all the officers who served with me in that army.

Page 45.] *If near 20,000 men, assisted by the British fleet were necessary to carry on the operations in Pennsylvania, a country which he acknowledges to be in general well affected to government, he must certainly know, that one third of that number were not sufficient to oppose the united force of the five most disaffected of all the revolted colonies.*

He misrepresents the numbers of the southern army, They amounted to 13,799 rank and file, including the British, foreign, and provincial force. I have acknowledged, that *I was informed the*

the country of Pennsylvania was in general well affected. I received such information principally from *Mr. Galloway*, who was a strong advocate for the expedition into that province.

Page 45.] *He could not have taken a more effectual step to sacrifice the northern army, than that of carrying his whole force to the southward, without leaving a corps sufficient to make a diversion in its favour.*

This is a very gross misrepresentation. So far from carrying my *whole force* to the southward, I left at New-York about 8,500 rank and file, fit for duty. I do not include the sick and convalescents of those corps, nor of the southern army, which together amounted to more than 3,000 men. With that force Sir Henry Clinton did make a diversion in favour of the northern army. But I shall ever insist, and I am supported by evidence in insisting, that the southern expedition, by drawing off General Washington and his whole force, was the strongest diversion that could have been made. This subject is fully discussed in my Narrative to the House of Commons (page 20) and Major General Grey's evidence is as follows :

Q: “ Did not the expedition to Philadelphia prove a powerful diversion in favour of the northern army ?

A. “ I think a stronger, or more solid diversion could not have been made, than that of drawing General Washington, and the whole continental army, near three hundred miles off.

Q: “ Whether the most probable motive, to have obliged General Washington to come to a general engagement, was not the preservation of Philadelphia; I mean, was there any other probable object that would have drawn General Washington to an engagement ?

A. “ I do not think there was any one object, which would have tempted General Washington to risk a general action, so much as the fear of losing the Capital of Pennsylvania.”

Q. “ Was

Q. " Was there any probability of bringing the war in America to a termination that campaign, without forcing General Washington to an engagement ?"

A. " Certainly not."

Q. " Whether, if Mr. Washington had had his choice, with respect to the direction of Sir William Howe's army, he would have wished him to have gone up the Hudson's river, or to Philadelphia ?"

A. " With the force that Sir William Howe had under his command I think, if General Washington had a wish, it was for him to have gone up the North river."

Page 46.] *Why was so high-spirited an army taken from the fight of an enemy of not half its force, put on board a fleet, and exposed to all the accidents and dangers of the ocean, &c.*

My reasons for going by sea are fully set forth in my Narrative (page 16).

Page 46.] *And why, when Philadelphia was his object, after he had experienced the opposition of the trade wind, did he obstinately persist in his circuitous route, &c.*

My reasons for going the circuitous route by Chesapeak-Bay are also given in my Narrative, and they are fully confirmed and justified by the deposition of Sir Andrew Snape Hammond to the House of Commons, which I have given in a subsequent remark.

Page 47.] *In the midst of victory the ardour of his troops was suppressed.*

I suppose the author here alludes to my conduct near the Lines of Brooklyn, on the 27th of August, 1776. As this was much scrutinized in the House of Commons, I shall fairly insert the evidence upon the subject.



*Examination of* EARL CORNWALLIS.

Q. “ Did your Lordship see the enemy’s Lines at Brooklyn, during the action of the 27th of August, 1776 ?”

A. “ I did not see them on that day with any accuracy ; I was on the left with the second Battalion of grenadiers, and could form no judgement.”

Q. “ From the knowledge you had of those Lines after the action, would it have been a prudent measure to have assaulted those works, on that day ?”

A. “ I apprehend the latter part of that question is matter of opinion ; I never did hear it suggested by any one, that those Lines could have been carried by assault.”

*Third Day’s Examination of* MAJOR GENERAL ROBERTSON.

Q. “ From the circumstances of the pursuit of the 27th of August, and the manner in which the rebels retreated, do you apprehend the Lines of Brooklyn might have been stormed ?”

A. “ There was a ridge of heights separated us from the rebels ; the rebels had possession of them, and it would have been very difficult to have forced them ; General Howe, by making a march in the night, got the better of the difficulty ; we got near the rebel camp without their perceiving us. General Howe put himself at the head of the troops, and pushed in between the heights and the rebel Lines ; by this move we got 2000 prisoners. Some of the troops were going to storm the Lines ; General Howe thought proper to order them back.”

Q. “ Do you apprehend, in the manner in which the rebels fled to the Lines, and in which that part of our army pursued them, that, if our troops had not been called back, they would have stormed the Lines, and carried them ?”

A. “ I did not myself know the strength of the Lines, nor do I believe General Howe did at that time. I have heard since, that the Lines were weakly manned ; and that Putnam, who  
“ had

“ had the command there of 7000 men, had detached all to the heights but 300 ; but this was a circumstance known to nobody at the time, it was a circumstance General Howe could not possibly know, and I did not myself, at that time, think, that storming them would have been a proper measure.”

Q. “ Do you know whether Sir William Howe took immediate care to follow the enemy, as soon as he was informed of their evacuating the Lines ?”

A. “ Sir William Howe was always alert. I sent my Aide-du-camp to head-quarters, to give notice that my Brigade was ready to march ; when he returned Sir William Howe was gone out, I apprehend, to head some part of the army.”

Q. “ On what do you found your opinion, that Sir William Howe could not be a judge of the force of the enemy’s lines on the 27th of August ?”

A. “ I marched at the head of my brigade to a place near the enemy’s Lines ; I went to the situation where I thought I could see them best from, without leaving my Brigade far ; and I could not make any judgement of the strength of the enemy’s Lines, from any place I could see them : This made me wish that the grenadiers would not go on ; and pleased to think that my ideas corresponded with Sir William Howe’s. I imagined that the General called back the troops, because he was unable to form a just estimate of the force of the Lines.”

Page 48.] *At Brunswick, in December, 1776, Lord Cornwallis was upon the heels of the enemy.—The destruction of a bridge over the Rariton saved them—only for a few hours.—Their further security was owing to the orders received by that nobleman to halt at Brunswick.*

*The Rariton is fordable in that place, at every recess of the tide ;—and had the noble General been free to act at his own discretion, he might, and no doubt would, have pursued his enfeebled and panic-struck enemy to the Delaware, over which they never could have passed, without falling into his hands.*

In answer to these assertions, I believe, it will be sufficient to oppose the evidence of Earl Cornwallis.

Q. "Would it have been prudent, to have pursued the enemy from Brunswic, with the part of your Lordship's corps, which first reached that place?"

A. "As my conduct in America forms no part of the present enquiry I certainly do not think myself, at present, accountable to this House for any action of my own. I am however, on the present occasion, free to say, that I could not have pursued the enemy from Brunswic, with any prospect of material advantage, or, without greatly distressing the troops under my command."

Q. "In what respect, would the pursuit of the enemy from Brunswic, have distressed the troops under your command?"

A. "We arrived at Brunswic the night of the first of December. We had marched that day twenty miles, through exceeding bad roads. We subsisted only on the flour we found in the country; and as the troops had been constantly marching, ever since their first entrance into the Jerseys, they had no time to bake their flour; the artillery horses, and baggage horses of the army were quite tired; that sufficiently proves, that we were not in a good condition to undertake a long march. The bridge over the Rariton was broken, which caused a necessary delay of one day. If the enemy could not have passed at Trenton, they might have marched down the east side of the Delaware. What I have said, I believe, is sufficient to prove, that we could not reap any considerable advantage from such pursuit."

Q. "Were the troops, under the command of your Lordship, in a condition to have marched before the 6th?"

A. "The troops would have been so undoubtedly."

Q. "What was the impediment to pursuing the march from Brunswic, as your Lordship says the troops were undoubtedly able before the 6th?"

A. "As the enemy had so much the start of us, I do not see there was any great object for the march. We wanted re-  
K "inforcement,



“ **inforcement**, in order to leave troops for the communication between Brunswick and Amboy. It was likewise necessary to pay some attention to a considerable body of troops, then passing the north river, under General Lee.”

Q. Did you stop at Brunswick, from the 1st to the 6th, in consequence of orders?”

A. “ I understood it to be the General’s direction, that I should halt at Brunswick, but had I seen, that I could have struck a material stroke, by moving forward, I certainly should have taken it upon me to have done it.”

Page 48.] *At Brunswick the British army halted near a week. Washington’s, consisting of 3000 men, lay at Prince-Town, seventeen miles—and at Trenton on the Delaware, twenty-nine miles distant, with all his heavy cannon and baggage.*

The reasons for halting at Brunswick are stated above by Earl Cornwallis.

Washington’s force, at this time, consisted of 6000 men, exclusive of Lee’s corps of 4000. General Washington lost no time, in crossing his artillery and baggage over the Delaware at Trenton, before we could move from Brunswick. He also crossed part of his troops, keeping a corps on the east side to observe our motions.

Page 49.] *On the 7th of December, the army marched from Brunswick at four o’clock in the morning, and arrived at Prince-Town in the afternoon about the same hour.*

The troops of the left column were not in their cantonments, in the evening of the march to Prince-Town, until after dark, and those of the right column, not until some hours after dark. Earl Cornwallis (that his march might be impeded as little as possible) left his tents behind him.

Page 49.] *He waited at Prince-Town seventeen hours, marched at nine o’clock on the morning of the eighth, and arrived at Trenton at four o’clock in the afternoon.*

The cause of not marching earlier the following day was, that the enemy had broken down a bridge, which could not be sooner repaired, and rendered fit for the passage of artillery, &c.

Page 50.] *Every one expected, that he would pass that river (the Delaware) as it is so easily practicable, and as it must have been followed by the greatest advantages.*

To this also I shall oppose the evidence of Earl Cornwallis, viz.

Q. “ Was there any movement made in the pursuit of the enemy to Trenton, with a design to cross the Delaware at that time ? ”

A. “ The night that the General arrived at Trenton, he detached me, with a considerable corps of troops, from Maidenhead to Coriel’s-Ferry, where we had some hopes, from previous measures taken by the General, that we should have found boats to cross the river. Our expectations were disappointed, and we found no boats.”

Q. “ Whether the execution of that measure (crossing the Delaware) was practicable at that time ? ”

A. “ As the Delaware was not fordable, and we could get no boats, it was certainly impracticable, as I have said.”

Page 51.] *The General having resolved not to cross the Delaware, began to form his winter cantonments. In this instance, he discovered no more military judgement than he had shewn vigour in pursuing his enemy. He scattered and extended them from Burlington to New-York, a space almost ninety miles; dividing his force into small distant parties, liable to be cut off by the enemy, one after another, with ease. But this was not the most censurable part of his conduct: the frontier posts, or those nearest to the enemy were committed to the command of foreigners, who could not understand the language of the country.*

I have spoken fully upon this subject in my Narrative; but as a farther justification, I shall here add the testimony of Earl Cornwallis, viz.



Q. " For the reasons then known to your Lordship, was  
 " Sir William Howe justifiable, in having taken Trenton into  
 " the chain of cantonments, and for posting the Hessian troops,  
 " with the 42d regiment, there, and at Bordentown, under the  
 " command of Colonel Donop ? "

A. " This again is a question of opinion, and does come  
 " under the description of those, which I think myself not  
 " bound to answer: but, as I believe I was the person, who first  
 " suggested the idea to the General, of taking Trenton and Bor-  
 " dentown in the chain of his cantonments, I think myself in  
 " honour bound to answer it.

" The advantage that must naturally arise, from holding so  
 " large a part of the Jerseys; the great encouragement we met  
 " with from the inhabitants, three or four hundred of whom  
 " came in and took the oath every day, for at least ten days;  
 " the great advantage we should derive, from obtaining forage  
 " and provisions, made me think it adviseable to risk that extended  
 " cantonment. Human prudence could not foresee the fatal  
 " event of the surrender of Colonel Rhall's brigade. I appre-  
 " hended no danger, but the chance of having our quarters beat  
 " up in the winter; and the object, in my opinion, towards  
 " finishing the war, was of greater consequence, than two or  
 " three victories. In regard to what the General mentions, of  
 " posting the Hessians on the left of the cantonments, I must  
 " say, I ever had, and still have, the highest opinion of those  
 " brave troops. The misfortune at Trenton was owing entirely  
 " to the imprudence and negligence of the commanding Officer.  
 " On all other occasions, the troops ever have behaved, and, I  
 " dare say, ever will behave, with the greatest courage and intre-  
 " pidity. The behaviour, on the attack of Fort Washington,  
 " of this very brigade of Colonel Rhall's, was the admiration  
 " of the whole army."

To this I will add the testimony of Sir George Osborne, who  
 being asked " if he ever heard Colonel Donop express his senti-  
 " ments, relative to the post at Trenton, either before or after  
 " his defeat ? " answered.

" In



“ In the situation I had the honour to be with the Hessian troops, I lived in a degree of friendship with Colonel Donop, and very frequently, after the misfortune at Trenton, he acquainted me, that if Colonel Rhall had executed the orders he had delivered to him from Sir William Howe, which were to erect redoubts at the post at Trenton, that his opinion was, it would have been impossible to have forced Colonel Rhall's brigade, before he could have come to his assistance from Bordentown,”

Page 95.] *Which (viz. Washington's whole force) being at this time less than 4,000.*

Washington, after Lee's corps joined him, had never less than about 8,000.

Page 61.] *He did not open the campaign till the 12th of June.*

I have spoken to this point above..

Page 61.] *On that day (12th of June) the British General assembled his troops at Brunswick. Washington was encamped on a hill above Quibble-Town, about nine miles from that place, on the north side of the Rariton, with fewer than 6000 undisciplined and badly appointed troops; which, with a corps under Sullivan of 2000 men at Prince-Town, composed his whole force.*

From intelligence I then had, and which I have not since had any reason to doubt, Washington had not less than 10,000 in his camp, on the hill above Quibble Town.

Page 61.] *His camp (at Quibble-Town) was far from being inaccessible or fortified. It was strong and defensible in front, because it was guarded by the Rariton, and the hill was steep and difficult of access: but in his rear, towards the mountains, or on his right, towards the Delaware, it was by no means impracticable of assault.*

His camp was to the full as inaccessible in the rear, as in the front; and an attack upon his right flank (from every account I could get) would have been still more hazardous.

Page 62.] *These circumstances plainly informed Washington, that Sir William Howe did not mean to cross the Delaware, and that he was not anxious to bring on an action.*

General Washington was certainly induced to believe, that my intention was to attack him; and had he not been perfectly satisfied with the strength of his post, he would not have remained so long in it.

Page 63.] *Sir William Howe, with 17,000 men, was in the field, in sight of his contemptible enemy.*

I marched from Brunswick with about 11,000 fighting men. It being necessary to leave the posts of Amboy and Brunswick in a proper state of defence, between 3 and 4,000 men were left for that purpose. This circumstance is more particularly explained in my Narrative (page 15).

Page 66.] *The note (c).*

This note is a criticism on the variation of my plans. My plans undoubtedly did vary, according to circumstances. The variation of circumstances, and the variation of my plans, are stated in my Narrative so fully, as to require no farther discussion.

[Page 68 and 69.]

The author here adopts the common place arguments against the expedition up the Chesapeak. If what I have said in my Narrative upon that subject is not satisfactory, the evidence of Sir Andrew Snape Hammond, is so full, so clear, and so uncontroversial, that I should imagine the expediency of that route can no longer admit of a doubt, in the mind of any impartial man.

*Martins*



*Martis 11 die Maii, 1779.*

COMMITTEE to consider of the several papers, which were presented to the House, by Mr. De Grey, upon the 19th day of March last, pursuant to their Address to his Majesty.

Mr. FREDERICK MONTAGUE IN THE CHAIR.

Sir *Andrew Snape Hammond* called in, and examined by Sir William and Lord Howe.

Q. “ Did you serve in the Squadron, under the command of Lord Howe, in North-America, in 1777 ?”

A. “ I did ; I commanded a detached Squadron on the coast of Delaware and Virginia, for a year and a half, except at some intervals prior to that period.”

Q. “ Had you been employed in the command of a detachment of frigates, to watch the motion of the rebels on the Delaware, for several months antecedent to the arrival of the British fleet, off of the entrance of that river, on the 30th of July 1777 ?”

A. “ I was employed on that service for several months before.”

Q. “ Of what number of Ships and vessels do you reckon that fleet consisted ; I mean the British fleet which arrived off the Delaware ?”

A. “ Of two hundred and fifty sail.”

Q. “ Was the navigation of the Delaware very intricate, and hazardous, especially from the shoals and rapidity of the tides ?”

A. “ It certainly is ; I do not know any river so difficult of navigation.”

Q. “ Was it more particularly so, for the expeditious passage of large ships of war ?”

A. “ Large ships of war can only pass certain places at particular times of tides.”

Q. “ What was your report to Lord Howe, on the 30th of July, of the position of the enemy on the banks of the Delaware ?”

A. “ The



A. " The report which I recollected I made to Lord Howe on that day was, That I had received intelligence the day before that General Washington had crossed the Delaware, and was marching down to Wilmington from Philadelphia."

Q. " What did you understand to be the nature of the Pennsylvania shore, with respect to an easy communication with the interior parts of the country, up to Reedy Island?"

A. " The coast of the Delaware from Cape Hinlopen all the way up to Reedy Island is marshy low land, very full of creeks, and communicates to the Upland only by causeways."

Q. " What was the nature of the shore on the same side from Reedy Island to Newcastle?"

A. " In some places marshy, in others some tolerable landing places."

Q. " What extent of anchorage do you suppose the fleet would occupy in any part of the navigable channel of the Delaware from Reedy Island up to Chester?"

A. " The main channel of the river is so narrow till you pass Wilmington, or rather till you pass Newcastle, that I conclude it would require at least four miles, if not more."

Q. " At what distance must the ships and vessels lie from the shore in such anchorage?"

A. " Within gun shot on both sides—within cannon shot in all places, and within musquet shot in some."

Q. " How many miles an hour do the tides run in the Delaware?"

A. " Between three and four."

Q. " What did you understand to be the water-guard, which the rebels had provided, to obstruct the free navigation of the river; I mean the whole force on the river?"

A. " There were two frigates at Philadelphia, not complete as to men—at Mud-Island, where the fort was, there was a ship called the Province ship, which mounted eighteen 18 pounders  
" —the

“ —the Delaware frigate of twenty-eight 12 pounders—two  
 “ xebecks, mounting each two 24 pounders in their bow, two  
 “ 18 pounders in their stern, and four 9 pounders each in their  
 “ waist—a brig mounting sixteen 6 pounders—two floating bat-  
 “ teries, the one twelve 18 pounders, the other of 10; these  
 “ guns were moveable on either side—thirteen row gallies, each  
 “ carrying one gun, from 32 pounds to 18—thirty-six row boats,  
 “ or half gallies, carrying a 6 pounder, or a 4 pounder—I believe  
 “ that was all, except fire rafts, of which there were twenty-  
 “ five, or thirty—each composed of five stages chained together.”

Q. “ Did it appear afterwards, that your report of that water  
 “ guard was well founded ?”

A. “ It did ; I saw them all myself.”

Q. “ Whether the proper boats of the ships of war were of  
 “ a construction and force, well adapted to oppose their water  
 “ guard on night service ?”

A. “ Certainly not.”

Q. “ Whether the small armed vessels of the fleet were ade-  
 “ quate to that purpose, the Cornwallis galley excepted ?”

A. “ By no means.”

*[Examined by the other Members of the Committee.]*

Q. “ What is the nature of the shore above Reedy Island,  
 “ and below Wilmington, with respect to the flatness of the  
 “ country, and the ease of covering a landing by the ships ?”

A. “ I have before said, that the shore before Reedy Island  
 “ and Newcastle is marshy in some places, and that there are  
 “ landing places in parts of it—Above Newcastle, as far as Wil-  
 “ mington Creek, it is an entire marsh.”

Q. “ Could the army have landed either at Newcastle, or  
 “ upon any parts of the western shore of the Delaware, between  
 “ Newcastle and Reedy Island ?”

L

A. “ An

A. "An army can land any where, where there is no opposition."

Q. "Do you believe that the situation of the rebels was such, that they could have made such an opposition as to prevent our troops landing, assisted, as the troops could have been by the fleet, at the time of your report?"

A. "That is a question impossible for me to answer, unless I knew the force that was likely to oppose them."

Q. "What do you believe that force to have been?"

A. "The intelligence I received was, that General Washington was in that country with his whole army."

Q. "In what part of the country?"

A. "My intelligence mentioned Wilmington."

Q. "Whether in the situation of Wilmington, with respect to Newcastle, troops, posted at Wilmington, could have been used to prevent a landing at Newcastle, or below Newcastle?"

A. "I conceive the rebel army would have marched to the spot where the British troops meant to land; I do not suppose the rebel army were meant to remain posted at Wilmington."

Q. "Whether you believe the rebel troops could have kept possession of Newcastle, if they had marched there?"

A. "That question can only be answered by a land officer."

Q. "Do you now believe that the rebel troops were at, or near, Wilmington?"

A. "By the works I saw at Wilmington, I have reason to think, that the rebel army were there at that time—the 30th of July."

Q. "Do you know that a great western road leads from Newcastle to the Head of the Elk?"

A. "I have heard so."

Q. "Do



Q. " Do you see any reason to have prevented the rebel troops from marching to the Head of the Elk, in the same manner as you suppose they might have marched to Newcastle, from Wilmington ?"

A. " I have very little knowledge of the marching of armies."

Q. " How far is it from Newcastle to the head of the Elk ?"

A. " It is called by the map seventeen miles."

Q. " How far is it by sea from Cape Hinlopen to the Head of the Elk ?"

A. " About 350 miles."

Q. " Are there not many difficulties in the navigation to the Head of the Elk ?"

A. " There are some difficulties, but the navigation of the Chesapeake is exceedingly easy in general."

Q. " What is the distance between Reedy-Island and Newcastle ?"

A. " Five or six miles."

Q. " Might not the fleet have lain below Reedy-Island in safety, within a small distance of Reedy-Island ?"

A. " There is no part of the Delaware, between the shoals, where they could have lain, without being exposed to the fire rafts."

Q. " Whether the fleet, on returning to the Delaware, were not necessarily exposed to the fire rafts ?"

A. " When the fleet returned from the Chesapeake, they came in detachments, and we were in possession of the lower Chevaux de Frize of the enemy."

Q. " How far was the lower Chevaux de Frize from Reedy-Island ?"

A. " About eighteen or twenty miles."

Q. " Might not the fleet have gone up in detachments on the 30th of July and the beginning of August ?"

A. " That depends on the mode the Commanding Officer  
" chuses to conduct them in."

Q. " When you made the report on board the Eagle, on the  
" 30th of July, whether you mentioned the intelligence respect-  
" ing Wilmington, as a reason, to induce the Commander in  
" Chief to proceed up the Delaware?"

A. " I had no other inducement than to do my duty, and to  
" relate particularly to the Commanding officer every intelli-  
" gence I had received."

Q. " Was there any other intelligence given at the same  
" time?"

A. " I do not recollect any."

Q. " What do you conceive to be the reason, that the Com-  
" mander in Chief went to Chesapeak, instead of the Delaware?"

A. " As no publick reasons were given to me, I hope the  
" House will not think me wanting in respect to them, if I de-  
" cline saying what the substance of the private communication  
" was."

Q. " What is the width of the river, opposite to Newcastle?"

A. " The width of the river, immediately opposite Newcastle,  
" is about three miles."

Q. " What is the breadth of the navigable channel in that  
" place?"

A. " About two miles there, and below considerably  
" narrower."

Q. " What width in the narrowest parts below, between  
" the Pickpat shoals and Fort Penn?"

A. " Not above half a mile from one shoal to another in the  
" narrowest part."

Q. " How many days, from the 30th of July, does he  
" suppose it would have taken the fleet, to have come to anchor  
" off of Reedy-Island, in a disposition fit for landing the troops?"

A. " As

A. "As it would depend entirely on the wind, it is impossible to answer that directly, but I should suppose, not less than four or five days."

Q. "Suppose the wind fair?"

A. "With a fair wind, in three or four days."

Q. "With the whole fleet, ships of war and transports?"

A. "I have before said, the ships of war can pass particular shoals only, at particular times of the tide."

Q. "Do you apprehend that the enemy's water force would have been the greatest impediment to our landing troops above Reedy-Island?"

A. "Yes, I do; the row galleys, in particular, are constructed to go in very shoal water—they would lay on the flats of the river, where the ships guns could not be brought to bear on them."

Q. "Whether the ships guns could not be brought to bear on the bite of Newcastle?"

A. "Certainly they could."

Q. "Does he know the river St. Lawrence, and how many knots it runs on the ebb tide?"

A. "I never was there."

Q. "Have you not been informed by good accounts how many knots it runs?"

A. "I have heard the tide is rapid there, but I never knew with certainty at what rate,"

Q. "Do you understand the river St. Lawrence runs as rapid as the Delaware?"

A. "I can speak with no certainty."

Q. "Do you know at what rate the Humber runs on ebb tide?"

A. "I do not."



Q. " Do you know the Severn ? "

A. " I do not ? "

Q. " Will you say that a tide, running three knots and an half in an hour, is a rapid tide. "

A. " I think it is a very rapid tide. "

Q. " Have you not heard that the St. Lawrence runs ten knots an hour ? "

A. " I never did. "

Q. " Whether the rapidity of the tide, and the breadth of the river, do not both of them make a great difference, in the danger from the effects of the fire rafts ? "

A. " I conceive the stronger the tide runs, the danger from fire rafts is greater, if the channel is the same. "

Q. " Whether the fire rafts would not have floated, over any part of that breadth of three miles, at high water, or at three quarters tide ? "

A. " They certainly would float on every part of the river opposite to Newcastle ; but as they were directed by the gallies, it is to be conceived, that they would only be used in the channel. "

Q. " Having said that the frigates could not come near enough to fire at Newcastle-Bite ; if the landing of the troops had been attempted within-side of the frigates, and the frigates ranged round to protect them, whether the enemies gallies would have ventured within fire of the frigates ? "

A. " The enemy's water force was constructed to fire in the stream of the tide ; the tide ran too rapid for the ships of war to ride with springs upon their cables. I had before found the gallies very troublesome, and very little in my power to annoy them ; and therefore do conceive, as they had increased their force from the time I had been last up the river, they certainly would not have been idle on so important an occasion to themselves. "

Q. " Did

Q. " Did the gallies ever venture within fair reach of your guns, so as to engage ?"

A. " Yes, within point blank shot."

Q. " Did they hold any engagement with you ?"

A. " They had two engagements with me, the one five hours, and the other six, on two different days."

Q. " When was that ?"

A. " The 7th and 8th of May, 1776 ?"

Q. " Were they only gallies, or were there frigates with them ?"

A. " Only thirteen gallies, attended by fire-ships."

Q. " What execution did they do on board your ship ?"

A. " They killed two men, wounded six, damaged the mast very materially, and rendered all the sails useless."

Q. " Was that in the two days engagements of eleven hours ?"

A. " Yes, I have spoken to that time."

Q. " What force had you then ?"

A. " The Roebuck of 44 guns, Liverpool of 28 guns, and two armed tenders."

Q. " Was that the damage done on board all the vessels, or to your own only ?"

A. " What I mentioned before, was only in the Roebuck."

Q. " What was the damage with regard to the other ships ?"

A. " The Liverpool suffered in her masts and sails, several men were wounded, but I do not recollect any were killed."

Q. " How many frigates had Lord Howe on the 30th of July ?"

A. " To the best of my recollection, three. In the Delaware with the Roebuck, there were three more."

Q. " How

Q. "How many fifty gun ships?"

A. "I think two."

Q. "Do you know what damage you did to the gallies?"

A. "I never heard distinctly, but I believe not a great deal; they were such small objects, it was very difficult to strike them with cannon shot."

Q. "Could the gallies have effected their purpose of employing the fire rafts with effect, without coming within fair gun shot of the frigates?"

A. "When the rebels burnt any fire rafts, the rebel gallies never quitted them, till they were within half gun shot."

Q. "What ships to your knowledge, did the rebels ever attack with fire rafts, and with what effect?"

A. "They attacked the squadron under my command several times with fire rafts—the first time off of Chester, where the channel is about one third of a mile wide; the ships were employed in taking men on board, when the enemy came down with the fire rafts—they came within half gun shot before they lighted the fire rafts; at the same time they discharged their guns from the gallies—the tide run very strong—the ships were obliged to slip their cables, to prevent the fire rafts being on board them, and to give the boats an opportunity to tow the fire rafts off. When the ships cast, their guns reached the gallies, which drove the gallies off, and permitted the boats to tow the fire rafts on shore; the ships at this time run a great risque of running a-ground, but fortunately escaped."

Q. "Did you not say, that this happened where the river was only one third of a mile wide; and that at Newcastle there is a two mile wide navigable channel?"

A. "Yes, I did, what I mentioned happened off of Chester, where there is an island that lies directly off, from which a shoal extends, so as to reduce the channel within one third of a mile."

Q. "Do



Q. " Do you know of an instance of any fire raft laying hold  
" of one of our ships, and setting it on fire ?"

A. " I do not ; the precautions that were taken prevented it."

Q. " Might not the noble Admiral's skill and precaution  
" have equally prevented it at Newcastle, if the fleet had pro-  
" ceeded there, after the 30th of July ?"

A. " If the fleet had all arrived off of Wilmington, I do con-  
" ceive it would then have been so capital an object to the  
" enemy, that they would have employed all their force in the  
" night to have effected such a purpose ; and if they had done  
" so, and conducted their expedition with any spirit, they must  
" certainly have put the fleet into very great confusion, as we  
" had no boats whatsoever, of a nature sufficient to have with-  
" stood their thirty-six row-boats, and thirteen gallies."

Q. " If the frigates had been placed on the outside, round  
" the vessels landing the troops, how would the gallies and row-  
" boats have passed the frigates, or how would they have ven-  
" tured to pass them, in your opinion ?"

A. " As the enemy possessed both shores, I think it exceed-  
" ingly possible for the gallies to have passed within the frigates,  
" and towed their fire rafts down to the fleet."

Q. " The river being stated to be three miles broad, what  
" assistance could the rebels, from being in possession of the east  
" shore, be able to give to the gallies and row-boats, coming  
" down close along the west shore, at three miles distance, as  
" they must necessarily have done to molest our troops on their  
" landing ?"

A. " The gallies would require no assistance from the shore ;  
" they could come to any point, and lay in shoal water, until  
" they had effected their purpose ; and then have ran into any  
" creek above or below, as it would suit their purpose."

Q. " Whether the shoal water does not lie to the eastward  
" of the channel, in which our ships would have lain, to cover  
" the landing of the troops ?"

M

A. " There

A. " There is shoal water on each side in every part, except at the town of Newcastle."

Q. " There being then no shoal water at the town of Newcastle, whether the gallies coming down, and getting into shoal water, to the eastward of the channel, could have prevented our troops landing, by directing the fire rafts against them, or otherwise?"

A. " I do not apprehend the gallies would have lain on the east side, in case of any landing at Newcastle; they would have employed themselves to have opposed the landing on the west shore."

Q. " Would the gallies then have had any advantage from shoal water?"

A. " They would; I have only said there is no shoal at the town of Newcastle; above and below there is shoal water."

Q. " Could the gallies have lain any where on the west shore within our frigates, to have done any service, without being fully exposed to the fire of our frigates?"

A. " Yes, I think they could. There are so many little inlets and creeks, both above and below Newcastle, that the gallies could place themselves in, and, from the lowness of the marsh, do execution with their guns, when the frigates could see nothing but their masts."

Q. " Could not the fire of the frigates fairly reach the shore?"

A. " I have declared that it is only a gun shot from shore to shore, except just above Newcastle."

Q. " How near could a 36 gun frigate lie to the shore opposite Newcastle?"

A. " Along-side of the wharf."

Q. " How near could a 50 gun ship lie?"

A. " Within a very little near."

Q. " Whether

Q. " Whether he knew, previous to the 30th of July, any  
" one battery of the enemy mounted along the river below  
" Billingsport?"

A. " No. I did not."

Q. " Did he know of any body of troops stationed at any  
" place along the western side of the river?"

A. " I have said, that I received information, that General  
" Washington was there with his army."

Q. " Whether your intelligence went so far as to say, that  
" General Washington, or any part of his army, were arrived  
" so far as Wilmington?"

A. " The intelligence I received was from persons who had  
" never deceived me; therefore I had every reason to suppose  
" that it was true. The intelligence I gave the Admiral was, that  
" General Washington had crossed the Delaware with his army,  
" and was gone to take post at Wilmington."

Q. " Had the enemy any water guard, or any defences afloat,  
" or defences on shore, in Chesapeak-Bay, when the fleet  
" went up?"

A. " None."

Q. " Had the rebels any troops posted on the shore?"

A. " None that I heard of."

Q. " What is the breadth of the navigable channel of the  
" Delaware at Newcastle?"

A. " Nearly two miles."

Q. " Suppose a landing attempted at Newcastle, when part  
" of the troops were landed, some in boats, and some on board,  
" and that the row galleys had obliged the ships to slip their  
" cables to avoid the fire rafts, or had otherwise by those fire  
" rafts disarranged the fleet, what might have been the conse-  
" quence in that situation?"

A. " I conceive it would have been attended with the worst  
" of consequences; in so narrow a channel as that, it would



“ not have been possible for the fleet to have got under sail in the night-time.”

Q. “ Would it not have exposed that part of the troops, which were landed to be cut off ?”

A. “ That would depend on the force to oppose them.”

Q. “ Whether, though batteries are not erected, it is not in the power of an enemy in force, and provided with cannon, to bring them to bear so, as greatly to annoy ships in a river ?”

A. “ It certainly is.”

Q. “ Whether you would take on yourself, considering all the circumstances that came within your observation, to advise the Delaware, as an eligible place for landing an army, considering the force on shore, and the quantity and kind of force that was on the river ?”

A. “ I have always been of opinion, that the landing an army in the face of an enemy was always to be avoided, if the service can be effected by any other means.”

Q. “ Was there any thing particular in the circumstances of things, in the Delaware at that time, which could make an exception from that general rule, in favour of a landing ?”

A. “ None that I saw.”

Q. “ Whether, independent of the intelligence you had received concerning General Washington’s army, you had heard of any other troops being on the western side of the Delaware, at that time ?”

A. “ I knew of the militia belonging to each county being stationed there, and there was no part, from Cedar Creek to Reedy Island, that a boat could land at, without a body of armed men coming down to oppose it.”

Q. “ Had you any intelligence of the number of which the militia consisted, on the western side of the Delaware, at that time ?”

A. “ The

A. " The regiments of militia in each county were generally reckoned at 4 or 500 men. There was a Brigadier-General of the name of Rodney, who had the command of them."

Q. " Whether by the militia, you mean the militia of the Lower counties on the Delaware?"

A. " Yes, I do."

Q. " What is the distance from Cape Hinlopen to Cape Charles at the mouth of Chesapeak Bay?"

A. " Between 140 and 150 miles."

Q. " Did you give your advice and opinion to Lord Howe, on the 30th of July, to leave the Delaware, and go by Chesapeak Bay?"

A. " As I never was publickly consulted, I never gave any publick advice."

Q. " Whether the various obstructions you have stated, to prevent the army from landing in the Delaware, and the fleet proceeding up the river, were not known before Lord Howe arrived off the mouth of the Delaware, all except General Washington's army being on the march towards Wilmington?"

A. " I never informed the Admiral of the nature of those obstructions—whether he knew them from any other quarter, I cannot say."

Q. " Might not the Admiral have been fully informed on that subject, before he sailed from New-York?"

A. " He certainly might; and I should rather suppose he was."

Q. " How long did the fleet delay their course off the Delaware?"

A. " Not two hours."

Q. " How was the wind then?"

A. " Northerly—the wind was southerly some time before—the north wind just then sprang up."

Q. " How

Q. " How long did the wind continue at north ? "

A. " Till that evening, and no longer. "

Q. " Which are the winds that generally prevail on the coast towards the latter end of July ? "

A. " The south wind prevails ; but frequently the west and north-west, particularly in the night-time. "

Q. " When you spoke of the damage likely to be done by the fire rafts, did you not mean to confine yourself to their operation in the night ? "

A. " Yes, I did—but as the enemy was also provided with fire ships, I conceive those might have been used also in the day-time, with as much effect against a fleet at anchor, as the fire rafts might have been in the night ? "

Q. Do you think, with the wind southerly, the enemy could have given any obstruction to the fleet, sufficient to impede its course, before it came to Reedy-Island ? "

A. " I conceive not, if we had been certain that the southerly winds would have lasted—I should observe, that the southerly winds blow only in the day-time, and the northerly winds prevail in the night-time. "

Q. " How many hours sail is it from Reedy-Island to Newcastle, with a fair wind and flowing tide ? "

A. " With a single ship not above an hour—but with a fleet it is a very different thing. "

Q. " Supposing the ships had run up to Newcastle with a southerly wind, and a flowing tide, in the day-time, was it possible for either fire ships, fire rafts, or gallies, to have disturbed them, or prevented their landing troops, if there had been no resistance by an enemy on the shore ? "

A. " I conceive if the fleet had gone up the Delaware, the rebels would naturally have brought their water force down to the fleet ; that if the fleet had got under way, with the opportunity that the honourable gentleman has stated, they would naturally



“ naturally have gone before the fleet; and when they stopped,  
 “ in order to land the troops, the gallies would naturally have  
 “ taken their position.”

Q. “ Then all the obstructions, which you conceive might  
 “ have been made, would have been from the gallies, and not  
 “ from the fire ships, or fire rafts—Is that your meaning?”

A. “ The fire ships and fire rafts could not have acted, under  
 “ the circumstances of a fair wind and flowing tide.”

Q. “ Is it your opinion, that any number of gallies off New-  
 “ castle, which you admit to be so steep to the shore, that a  
 “ frigate could come to the wharf, and a fifty gun ship almost as  
 “ near, could have given any serious obstruction to the landing  
 “ of an army at that place?”

A. “ I never pretended to deny the practicability of landing  
 “ an army in the Delaware—I have only spoke to the expediency  
 “ of it.”

Q. “ Do you know what depth of water there is in the  
 “ Narrows in the Delaware?”

A. “ The Narrows is a strait between two shoals, in which  
 “ there is deep water, not less than six or seven fathom, but it is  
 “ extremely narrow.”

Q. “ What depth of water is there in the Flats above?”

A. “ On the Flats of Morris Liffon’s, which are the worst  
 “ flats on the river, at high water there is only twenty-five feet,  
 “ or twenty-six—that is, quite at high water.”

Q. “ Do you know the North or Hudson’s River.

A. “ No farther than Haverstraw-Bay.”

Q. “ Do you know the King’s Ferry.?”

A. “ No.”

Q. “ What depth of water is there at Morris Liffon’s at low  
 “ water?”

A. “ The tide rises and falls about eight feet.”

Q. “ Did

Q. "Did you understand, that, on the 30th of July, the enemy had a corps of troops at Wilmington?"

A. "I was so informed."

Q. "Was you informed what was the communication from Newcastle to the interior part of the country, to the head of Elk?"

A. "It has the Christien River on its right, which runs up at least ten or twelve miles before it is fordable."

Q. "Is Newcastle situated on a peninsula?"

A. "I am not very well acquainted with the lower parts of its situation; it has George River on its left, but at some distance."

Q. "Whether, from the superiority of metal of the rebel vessels in the Delaware, they could not have stationed themselves in such a manner, as to have annoyed any frigates, even with the assistance of a fifty-gun ship, that might have been destined to cover the landing of any body of troops, without being hurt by those ships with any probable effect?"

A. "I think, if they had had time and opportunity to have placed them, they would have made the landing very difficult."

Q. "Do you know how far it is from Newcastle to Cecil-Court House?"

A. "About seventeen miles."

Q. "Whether, in the march from Newcastle to Cecil-Court House, it would have been necessary to ford the Christien, or any other river whatsoever?"

A. "I have no knowledge of the interior part of that country, but from the map."

Q. "In what part of the Delaware was the water force of the rebels, on the 30th of July?"

A. "Part at Reedy-Island, and part at Mud-Island."

"What

Q. "What part was at Reedy-Island?"

A. "The brig galley, the schooner galley, and several of the latteen gallies—and several of their row-boats."

Q. "What part was at Mud-Island?"

A. "All the remaining part of the force."

Q. "What is the distance from Mud-Island to Reedy-Island?"

A. "Twenty-five, or twenty-six miles in the course of the river."

Q. "How high in the Delaware can a sixty-four gun ship go?"

A. "If there had been no obstruction in the river, a sixty-four gun ship might be carried to Philadelphia at high water."

Q. "Where does the first obstruction begin in the river?"

A. "At Billingsport."

Q. "How far is Billingsport above Newcastle?"

A. "Above twenty miles."

Q. "Whether a sixty-four gun ship can safely lie a good way above Newcastle, at all times of tide?"

A. "A sixty-four gun ship can at all times lie as high as Chester."

Q. "Must not the fleet have anchored every night in their way up the Delaware?"

A. "Certainly; it would not have been practicable to have kept under sail."

Q. "How many seamen were necessary for manning the flat boats, for landing the army?"

A. "I do not recollect how many—but I know, when the flat boats were manned, we had but very few men left on board the ships."

N

Q. "Whether



Q. “ Whether the seamen, for manning the flat boats, must  
“ not be taken from the line of battle ships ?”

A. “ That was the usual method practised, in order to make  
“ the frigates useful.”

Q. “ What number of boats were prepared for the landing ?”

A. “ To the best of my recollection, seventy-nine.”

Q. “ Would not that have taken upwards of 800 seamen to  
“ have manned them properly ?”

A. “ They were usually manned with twelve men, a cock-  
“ fwain, and officer, each.”

Q. “ Whether when you stated, that the first obstruction in  
“ the Delaware was at Billingsport, you intended to have it un-  
“ derstood, that no obstruction might be given to the course of  
“ the fleet, or the landing of the army, at any place of the shore  
“ below Billingsport ?”

A. “ When I mentioned the first obstruction being at  
“ Billingsport, I meant only as to the Chevaux de frize, which  
“ the enemy had stopped the channel with under water.”

Q. “ Did you mean to say that an army at land, having no  
“ batteries erected on the land below that Chevaux de frize,  
“ would have been an obstruction to a fleet coming up the Dela-  
“ ware ?”

A. “ If the fleet had proceeded up the river, they would  
“ have gone for many miles through a channel, where it was  
“ only a short gun shot, in many places, from side to side—it is  
“ therefore not to be presumed, that the enemy would have lost  
“ the opportunity of annoying the fleet, from every advantageous  
“ point.”

Q. “ Does this answer relate to the river above, or at and  
“ below Newcastle ?”

A. “ It relates principally to the parts above Newcastle, but  
“ also to some parts below.”

Q. “ Whether

Q. “ Whether the fleet, in going up the Chesapeake-Bay, were not obliged to cast anchor every night, even though there was no obstruction from the enemy ?”

A. “ They were—it is not possible in so narrow a navigation for the fleet to continue under sail during the night.

Q. “ Whether, in consequence of those difficulties in Chesapeake-Bay, the troops were not landed a month later, than they would have been at Newcastle, if a landing could have been effected there ?”

A. “ I do not conceive, that a fleet, being obliged to anchor in the night, can be considered a difficulty—the army was certainly landed later about three weeks, than they might have been by going up the Delaware, but it happened to be a very uncommon and very unusual passage. When the fleet left the mouth of the Delaware, the wind was northerly, and there was great reason to expect, that the fleet would have got to the head of Chesapeake Bay in less than a week. It happened otherwise, on account of the south winds setting in, which was attended with such uncommon hot weather, that, if the troops had been on shore at that time, they must have suffered exceedingly.”

Q. “ How far was the fleet advanced from the mouth of the Delaware when they met the southerly winds ?”

A. “ About ten leagues.”

Q. “ What number of soldiers did each boat take for landing, besides the seamen to conduct it ?”

A. “ That depends on the distance they have to go, and the opportunity they have for landing—in smooth water, and to go a short way, they might carry about forty-five men.”

Q. “ At how many turns, could the seventy-nine boats have landed the whole army ?”

A. “ That depends totally on the distance they have to go ; it is a matter of calculation. I do not know how many troops they had to land.”

Q. " What way do you conceive a fleet of men of war and transports could make against a tide of three and an half knots, with an unfavourable wind ; but such as would permit them to lie in their course, supposing moderate weather ? "

A. " The channel in the Delaware is so extremely narrow amongst the shoals, that unless the wind had been fair, the progress of the fleet must have been very slow indeed. "

Q. " You will answer the same question ; but supposing the wind to be a-head, or so near a-head, that they would be obliged to make way by turning or tacking ; still supposing moderate weather, and this too in the Delaware ? "

A. " With the wind and tide contrary, the fleet could make no way at all, but must lie at anchor. "

Q. " Have you not had much experience in the Delaware ? "

A. " I was a long time there. "

Q. " How long did you ever know a single ship detained, from going up the river, in the months of July or August, after she got within the Capes ? "

A. " About three days, between the Capes and Reedy-Island. I am speaking of a single ship, and not of a fleet. "

Q. " Did not the transports furnish seamen to man the boats for landing the troops ? "

A. " When the transports were in a state of security, they frequently did, but not when they were to move ; they were not then able from their complement of men. "

Q. " How many days did the wind stand to the southward, after you left the Delaware ? "

A. " The wind was variable : there were frequent calms which delayed the fleet. "

Q. " Was the wind in general, a north or south wind ? "

A. " In general southerly. "

Q. " Was



Q. " Was not that a fair wind to carry the fleet to New-castle?"

A. " If they had been in the Delaware, it certainly would."

Q. " In how many tides would the fleet have gone to New-castle from the Capes, with that wind?"

A. " It is impossible to answer that question—it depends on circumstances—the fleet were very ill provided with pilots—there were only eight or nine pilots to 250 sail."

Q. " As the winds and tides then were, all circumstances considered, how soon do you think the fleet might have reached Newcastle?"

A. " If I could be assured the fleet would keep in the right channel, and no accident at all would happen, I could then be able to answer the question."

Q. " Was not your ship stationed the foremost towards Brooklyn Ferry, the 27th and 28th of August, 1776?"

A. " My ship was employed with the others on that service."

Q. " Was not your ship, or any other, so stationed, as to have the view of Brooklyn Ferry, so open, as necessarily to see the boats pass backwards and forwards, between Brooklyn and New-York?"

A. " My ship was not, nor any other."

Q. " Whether, in passing up the Chesapeake or Delaware, the ships and transports were not necessarily obliged to keep very much together, in sailing through narrow channels?"

A. " The transports were necessarily obliged to keep close to the men of war, and also close to each other, in order to prevent getting a-ground, and the few pilots could only be distributed to the men of war."

Q. " If, when the transports were in that confined situation, by change of wind (the tide ceasing) they should be obliged to anchor, would it not be necessary they should separate considerably

“ siderably from each other, to prevent their falling on board  
“ each other.”

A. “ The ships would certainly do so, as much as they  
“ could.”

Q. “ How long would it have taken the rebels, to have  
“ brought their water force at Mud-Island down to Reedy-  
“ Island?”

A. “ In one ebb tide.”

Q. “ How long does the flood and ebb tide run in the  
“ Delaware?”

A. “ Ebb runs about seven hours, and flood about five.”

Q. “ Supposing the wind, which was northerly when the  
“ fleet quitted the mouth of the Delaware, had continued in  
“ that quarter, how long would it have taken that fleet to have  
“ got up to Newcastle?”

A. “ The fleet would not have got to Newcastle in ten days  
“ with a north wind.”

Q. “ How long could a great ship get up from Reedy-Island  
“ to Newcastle, before it is high water?”

A. “ Supposing the ships to have been at anchor at Reedy-  
“ Island, I conceive, if the weather had been moderate, and  
“ they had met with no accident, they might have reached  
“ Newcastle an hour before high water.”

Q. “ How many ships could have anchored at Newcastle  
“ where you have said the water was so deep close to the shore?”

A. “ I do not exactly know, but several might have anchored  
“ there.”

Q. “ What proportion of the fleet of 250 sail?”

A. “ A very small part.”

Q. “ Must not the rest have anchored some miles both above  
“ and below it?”

A. “ Certainly

A. " Certainly they must—I do not conceive that fleet could  
" have been anchored in less than four or five miles of ground."

Q. " Would they not then, as soon as the ebb tide made,  
" have been open to the attack of the enemy's gallies, fire ships,  
" and fire rafts, notwithstanding the frigates that were supposed  
" to be placed opposite the town of Newcastle?"

A. " They certainly would, and I do not believe the enemy  
" would have lost the opportunity."

Q. " Could any ship have been so stationed to open Brooklyn  
" Ferry, so as to observe the boats pass and repass to and from  
" New-York?"

A. " I think not, without being exposed to the batteries of  
" the enemy."

Q. " Whether, informed, as you was, of the navigation of  
" the Chesapeak Bay, and the navigation of the Delaware, with  
" the water defence that you understood to have been prepared  
" for that route, had you commanded the fleet of 250 sail  
" would you have preferred going up the Delaware, to going up  
" Chesapeak Bay?"

A. " Informed, as I was, of every circumstance respecting  
" the Chesapeak Bay and the Delaware, I was of opinion then,  
" and am of the same opinion still, that the going up Chesapeak  
" Bay was a very wise and proper measure."

Page 73, 74, and 75.]

These pages contain a criticism upon the battle of Brandywine, and upon my subsequent conduct. In answer to which I shall refer to the more respectable professional opinions of Earl Cornwallis and Major-General Grey.

*Evidence of* EARL CORNWALLIS.

Q. " Did your Lordship concur with Sir William Howe in  
" the propriety of dividing the army, to bring the enemy to  
" action at Brandywine?"

A. " The



A. “ The manœuvre that brought on the action of Brandywine certainly reflects the highest honour on the General. As I have already refused to inform this House whether I concurred in other operations, I have no right to take any merit from concurring in this.”

Q. “ Did your Lordship observe, that any advantage was lost which might have been taken, in consequence of that battle?”

A. “ I did not see that any advantage was lost.”

*Evidence of MAJOR GENERAL GREY.*

Q. “ Was you of opinion, that the division of the army, to bring the enemy to action at Brandywine, was judicious and expedient?”

A. “ I think the division of the army before the battle of Brandywine was a masterly movement, deceived the enemy, and brought on the action with almost a certainty of success.”

Q. “ Did you observe, that any advantage was lost, that might have been taken, in consequence of that battle?”

A. “ I know of none.”

I here beg leave to insert an extract of my letter of the 10th of October, 1777, to the Secretary of State, which contains a journal of my operations immediately previous, and subsequent to, the battle of Brandywine.

*Extract of a letter from SIR WILLIAM HOWE to LORD GEORGE GERMAIN, N<sup>o</sup>. 68, dated Head Quarters, German-Town, October 10th, 1777.*

“ ON the 3d of September (Major General Grant, with six battalions, remaining at the head of Elk, to preserve the communication with the fleet) the two columns (*under Earl Cornwallis and General Knyphausen*) joined at Pencadder, four miles to the eastward of Elk on the road to Christien-Bridge. In this day's march the Hessian and Anspach chafeurs, and the second battalion of light infantry, who were at

“ the

“ the head of Lord Cornwallis's column, fell in with a chosen  
 “ corps of 1000 men from the enemy's army advantageously  
 “ posted in the woods, which they defeated with the loss only  
 “ of two officers wounded,—three men killed, and nineteen  
 “ wounded,—when that of the enemy was not less than fifty  
 “ killed, and many more wounded.

“ On the 6th, Major-General Grant, after Captain Duncan,  
 “ who superintended the naval department, had destroyed such  
 “ vessels and stores as could not be removed from the Head of  
 “ Elk, joined the army. The whole marched on the 8th by  
 “ Newark, and encamped that evening on the Township of Ho-  
 “ kessen, upon the road leading from Newport to Lancaster, at  
 “ which first place General Washington had taken post, having  
 “ his left to Christien-Creek, and his front covered by Red  
 “ Clay-Creek.

“ The two armies in this situation being only four miles apart,  
 “ the enemy moved early in the night of the 8th, by the Lan-  
 “ caster-Road, from Wilmington, and about ten o'clock next  
 “ morning crossed Brandywine-Creek at Chads-Ford, taking post  
 “ on the heights on the eastern side of it.

“ On the 9th in the afternoon, Lieut. General Knyphausen  
 “ marched with the left of the army to New-Garden and  
 “ Kennets-Square, while Lord Cornwallis, with the right moved  
 “ to Hokeffen meeting-house, and both joined the next morning  
 “ at Kennets-Square.

“ On the 11th at day-break, the army advanced in two  
 “ columns, the right commanded by Lieut. General Knyphausen  
 “ consisting of four Hessian battalions under Major-General Stirn;  
 “ the first and second brigades of British, three battalions of the  
 “ seventy-first regiment, the Queen's American Rangers, and  
 “ one squadron of dragoons, under Major-General Grant, having  
 “ with them six medium twelve-pounders, four howitzers, and  
 “ the light artillery belonging to the brigades: this column took  
 “ the direct road to Chads-Ford, seven miles distant from  
 “ Kennets-Square, and arrived in front of the enemy about ten  
 “ o'clock, skirmishing most part of the march with their ad-  
 “ vanced troops, in which the Queen's American Rangers, com-  
 “ manded



“ manded by Capt. Wemys of the fortieth regiment, distinguished themselves in a particular manner.

“ The other column under the command of Lord Cornwallis, Major General Grey, Brigadier Generals Mathew and Agnew, consisting of the mounted and dismounted chasseurs, two squadrons of the 16th dragoons, two battalions of light infantry, two battalions of British, and three of Hessian grenadiers, two battalions of guards, the third and fourth brigades, with four light twelve-pounders, and the artillery of the brigades, marched about twelve miles to the forks of Brandywine, crossed the first branch at Trimble's-Ford, and the second at Jeffry's-Ford, about two o'clock in the afternoon, taking from thence the road to Dilworth, in order to turn the enemy's right at Chad's-Ford.

“ General Washington, having intelligence of this movement about noon, detached General Sullivan to his right, with near 10,000 men, who took a strong position on the commanding ground above Birmingham-Church, with his left near to the Brandywine, both flanks being covered by very thick woods, and his artillery advantageously disposed.

“ As soon as this was observed, which was about four o'clock, the King's troops advanced in three columns, and, upon approaching the enemy formed the line, with the right towards Brandywine. The guards were upon the right, and the British grenadiers upon their left, supported by the Hessian grenadiers in a second line: to the left of the centre were the two battalions of light infantry with the Hessian and Anspach chasseurs, supported by the fourth brigade. The third brigade formed the reserve.

“ Lord Cornwallis having formed the line, the light infantry and chasseurs began the attack; the guards and grenadiers instantly advanced from the right, the whole under a heavy fire of artillery and musquetry; but they pushed on with an impetuosity not to be sustained by the enemy, who falling back into the woods in their rear, the King's troops entered with them, and pursued closely for near two miles.”

“ After



“ After this success, a part of the enemy's right took a second  
 “ position in a wood about half a mile from Dilworth, from  
 “ whence the second light infantry and chasseurs soon dislodged  
 “ them, and from this time they did not rally again in force.

“ The first British grenadiers, the Hessian grenadiers, and  
 “ guards, having in the pursuit got entangled in very thick  
 “ woods, were no further engaged during the day.

“ The second light infantry, and second grenadiers, and fourth  
 “ brigade, moved forward a mile beyond Dilworth, where they  
 “ attacked a corps of the enemy, that had not been before en-  
 “ gaged, and were strongly posted to cover the retreat of their  
 “ army, by the roads from Chads-Ford to Chester and Wil-  
 “ mington, which corps not being forced until after it was dark,  
 “ when the troops had undergone much fatigue in a march of  
 “ seventeen miles, besides what they supported since the com-  
 “ mencement of the attack, the enemy's army escaped a total  
 “ overthrow, that must have been the consequence of an hour's  
 “ more day-light.

“ The third brigade was not brought into action, but kept in  
 “ reserve, in the rear of the fourth brigade, it not being known  
 “ before it was dark, how far Lieutenant-General Knyphausen's  
 “ attack had succeeded; nor was there an opportunity of em-  
 “ ploying the cavalry.

“ Lieutenant-General Knyphausen, as had been previously  
 “ concerted, kept the enemy amused in the course of the day  
 “ with cannon, and the appearance of forcing the ford, without  
 “ intending to pass it, until the attack upon the enemy's right  
 “ should take place. Accordingly, when it began, Major-  
 “ General Grant crossed the ford with the 4th and 5th regiments;  
 “ and the 4th pressing first, forced the enemy from an intrench-  
 “ ment and battery, where three brass field-pieces and a 5-inch  
 “ and a half howitzer were taken, that had been placed there to  
 “ command the ford.

“ The enemy made little stand on that side after the work  
 “ was carried, when the guards appearing on their right flank,  
 “ the retreat became general; but darkness coming on, before  
 “ Lieutenant-

“ Lieutenant-General Knyphausen’s corps could reach the heights, there was no further action on that side.

“ From the most correct accounts, I conclude the strength of the enemy’s army, opposed to Lieutenant-General Knyphausen and Lord Cornwallis, was not less than 15,000 men, a part of which retired to Chester, and remained there that night; but the greater body did not stop until they reached Philadelphia. Their loss was considerable in officers killed and wounded; and they had about 300 men killed, 600 wounded, and near 400 made prisoners.

“ The loss on the side of his Majesty’s troops, and the ordnance, ammunition, and stores taken from the enemy, will appear in the enclosed returns.

“ The army lay this night on the field of battle; and on the 12th, Major-General Grant, with the 1st and 2d brigades, marched to Concord. Lord Cornwallis, with the light infantry and British grenadiers, joined him next day, and proceeded to Ashtown, within five miles of Chester.

“ On the same day (the 13th) the 71st regiment was detached to Wilmington, where the enemy had thrown up works, both to the land and to the river, with seven pieces of cannon in the latter; but these works being evacuated, Major Mac Donnell took possession of the place without opposition, and made Mr. M’Kinley, the new-appointed President of the Lower Counties on Delaware, his prisoner.

“ On the 14th, Lieutenant-Colonel Loos, with the combined battalion of Rhall’s brigade, escorted the wounded and sick to Wilmington, whither the battalion of Mirbach was sent two days afterwards to join him.

“ The army moved in two columns towards Goshen on the 16th; and intelligence being received upon the march, that the enemy was advancing upon the Lancaster road and were within five miles of Goshen, it was immediately determined to push forward the two columns, and attack them; Lord Corn-

“ wallis



“ wallis to take his route by Goshen meeting-house, and Lieutenant-General Knyphausen by the road to Downington.

“ The two divisions proceeded on their march, but a most violent fall of rain setting in, and continuing the whole day and night without intermission, made the intended attack impracticable.

“ The first light infantry, at the head of Lord Cornwallis's column, meeting with a part of the enemy's advanced guard about a mile beyond Goshen, defeated them, killing twelve, and wounding more without the loss of a man.

“ Nearly at the same time the chasseurs, in front of Lieutenant-General Knyphausen's column, fell in with another party, of which they killed an officer and five men, and took four officers prisoners, with the loss of three men wounded.

“ The enemy, being thus apprised of the approach of the army, marched with the utmost precipitation the whole night of the 16th, and got in the morning to the Yellow Springs, having, as it is since known, all their small ammunition damaged by the excessive rain.

“ In the morning of the 17th, Lord Cornwallis advanced to the Lancaster Road, and took post about two miles distant from Lieutenant-General Knyphausen.

“ The army joined in the Lancaster Road at the White Horse on the 18th, and marched to Truduffrin, from whence a detachment of light infantry was immediately sent to the Valley Forge upon Schuylkill, where the enemy had a variety of stores, and a considerable magazine of flour. The 1st battalion of light infantry, and the British grenadiers, took post there next day and were joined on the 20th by the guards.

“ The enemy crossed the Schuylkill on the 18th above French Creek, and encamped upon the river, on each side of Perkyomy Creek, having detached troops to all the forts of Schuylkill with cannon at Swedes Fort, and the Forts below it.

“ Upon intelligence that General Wayne was lying in the woods, with a corps of 1500 men and four pieces of cannon,  
“ about



“ about three miles distant, and in the rear of the left wing of  
 “ the army, Major General Grey was detached on the 20th, late  
 “ at night, with the 2d Light Infantry, the 42d and 44th regi-  
 “ ments, to surprise this corps. The most effectual precautions  
 “ being taken by the General to prevent his detachment from  
 “ firing, he gained the enemy's left about one o'clock; and  
 “ having, by the bayonet only forced their out-sentries and  
 “ pickets, he rushed in upon the encampment, directed by  
 “ the light of the fires, killed and wounded not less than 300  
 “ on the spot, taking between 70 and 80 prisoners, the greater  
 “ part of their arms, and eight waggons loaded with baggage  
 “ and stores. Upon the first alarm the cannon were carried  
 “ off, and the darkness of the night, only, saved the rest of the  
 “ corps. One captain of light infantry, and three men, were  
 “ killed in the attack, and four men wounded. Gallantry in  
 “ the troops, and good conduct in the General, were fully  
 “ manifest upon this critical service.

“ On the 21st, the army moved by Valley Forge, and encamp-  
 “ ed upon the banks of the Schuylkill, extending from Fat-  
 “ Land Ford to French Creek. The enemy upon this move-  
 “ ment quitted their position, and marched towards Pots-  
 “ Grove in the evening of this day.

“ On the 22d, the grenadiers and light infantry of the guards  
 “ crossed over to take post; and the chasseurs crossing soon  
 “ after at Gordon's Ford, opposite to the left of the line, took  
 “ post there also. The army was put in motion at midnight,  
 “ the van-guard being led by Lord Cornwallis, and the whole  
 “ crossed the river at Fat-Land Ford without opposition.  
 “ Major-General Grant who commanded the rear guard with  
 “ the baggage, passed the river before two o'clock in the after-  
 “ noon; and the army encamped on the 23d with its left to the  
 “ Schuylkill, and the right upon the Monatony road, having  
 “ Stony Run in front. The two battalions of light infantry  
 “ were detached to Swedes Ford, which a small party of the  
 “ enemy immediately quitted, leaving six pieces of iron cannon  
 “ behind them.

“ On the 25th, the army marched in two columns to German  
 “ Town,

“ Town, and Lord Cornwallis, with the British grenadiers,  
“ and two battalions of Hessian grenadiers, took possession of  
“ Philadelphia the next morning.”

Page 76] “ *A fall of rain prevented the intended attack.*”

This assertion is meant by the author as a sarcasm. Major-General Grey's evidence proves, that this attack “ was prevented  
“ by the weather which rendered it *impossible* ;” that is, it prevented the troops and artillery from getting forward. The latter did not come to the ground until it was dark.—But as the author thinks it ridiculous that a fall of rain should prevent the operations of an army, I will subjoin the evidence of Earl Cornwallis, who was examined to that point.—

Q. “ Was there not a time, at the White Plains, when our  
“ army lay on their arms, intending to attack the enemy, but  
“ were prevented by rain?”

A. “ After the enemy fell back to the heights near North  
“ Castle, they left an advanced corps on the heights of the White  
“ Plains. There were orders given for an attack of that corps,  
“ which was prevented by a violent rain. We did not lie upon  
“ our arms.”

Q. “ From the situation of the rebel army and of our's, was  
“ that storm of rain in their or our faces?”

A. “ I do not apprehend that the attack was prevented by  
“ the storm of rain in either of our faces. There are other effects of a storm of rain; such as spoiling the roads, and preventing the drawing artillery up steep hills.”

Page 78.] “ *Capt. Montresor, the chief engineer, had, before  
“ the rebellion, surveyed Mud Island, and taken the bearings and  
“ distances of the shores on each side the river. He saw the absolute necessity of repairing those dykes, and stopping out the waters, before any effectual progress could be made in erecting the  
“ batteries. A gentleman of considerable influence in the city, who  
“ was of the same opinion, offered to have these repairs effected in  
“ a few days. This was all pointed out to the Commander in Chief,  
“ but, from what motive is unknown to this day, they were not permitted*”



“ mitted to be made. The workmen, obliged to work in water and soft mud, laboured in vain. The work they performed in the reflux of the tide, the influx washed away. Thus a month was shamefully wasted, and no progress made towards taking the fort. At length, Lord Cornwallis sent for the gentleman who had offered to repair the dykes, informed him that it must be done previously to the erecting of the batteries, and requested he would undertake it. This he did with chearfulness; and although the breaches were as large again as when he first proposed the repairs the work was finished in six days—The batteries were immediately erected without difficulty, and opened on the 10th.”

It has been before observed, that orders were given to the Chief Engineer, upon the King's troops entering Philadelphia, to construct redoubts, and to form the necessary lines of communication, for the better security of that city; that on this work he was directed to employ the inhabitants, to be furnished, at my particular request, by Mr. Galloway, for the relief of the soldiery; and that this assistance fell far short of that gentleman's assurances.

The necessity of repairing the dykes on Province and Blackeley's islands, before an effectual progress could be made in erecting batteries against Mud Island, was an object of still more consequence; and any offers to effect it, instead of being rejected, would have been gladly accepted. I am confident that none were made to me, and have the most explicit authority for saying, that such offers having been made never arrived to the knowledge of those immediately intrusted with the execution of the work. The conduct of it was under the direction of Earl Cornwallis, until I moved to Philadelphia with the main army on the 19th of October; and those, who have a just opinion of his lordship's zeal to promote his Majesty's service by every possible means, will hardly suppose him to have been inattentive in this essential point.

Eleven dyke-men were, I find, sent to the engineer on the 22d of October, and, I am very ready to grant, were of considerable service for the few days they assisted. But it cannot be conceived that these men effected in *six days*, by their own labour, the stopping of breaches that had encreased to be *as large again*  
under



under the efforts made to stop them by all the carpenters in the engineer's department, assisted by those in the bridge-master's and the military working parties for the day: nevertheless, the author roundly asserts, that in consequence of *their* assistance, *the batteries were immediately erected without difficulty*, and opened on the 10th of November.

The fact is, that the military carpenters, and working parties before-mentioned, laboured most incessantly, from the 7th of October, under a continued fire from Mud Island and batteries afloat, to repair the dykes; that notwithstanding the great interruptions from heavy rains, and high freshes in the Delaware, 19,800 yards of banking, exclusive of roads and bridges, were repaired, so as to open four batteries on the 15th of October: but these not proving effectual, for want of heavier cannon, there was a necessity of procuring them from the King's ships.

The interval from the time the first batteries opened, on the 15th of October, to the arrival of the battering guns from the Eagle and Somerset, was not *shamefully wasted*, but indefatigably employed in continuing the extensive lines (two miles and a half) —transporting materials for throwing two bridges across the Schuylkill, and in the construction of two Têtes des ponts.

Page 80.] *Possessed of these ideas, Colonel Stirling desired to take possession of Red-Bank; but it was not granted him.*

This is entirely a misrepresentation. The affair of Red-Bank is discussed in my Narrative; and the evidences of Earl Cornwallis and Major-General Grey form a complete answer to every thing that can be said upon the subject.

Page 85.] *Men who are perfectly acquainted with the ground of Washington's camp (at White-Marsh) the easy approach to it in its rear, the variety of good roads leading to it, either on the right or left, and the great advantages which the British troops would have commanded by a movement round the camp, were astonished at his return, without effecting any good purpose, especially as it was well known, that Washington's troops were in the greatest panic and confusion, and prepared night and day for flight, during the time the British army lay in the neighbourhood.*

I had the best intelligence that the enemy's post was not assailable in the rear ; and the truth of that intelligence was corroborated by several of our own officers, who went over the ground in the spring following. The intention of my march was to attack Washington, had I found it adviseable when I came to the spot, and not to remain in the field in that inclement season.—Merely to move him from that post was no object.

What does Major-General Grey say in his evidence upon this subject ?

Q. “ Do you think an attack on the enemy's army at White-Marsh would have been adviseable ?

A. “ I think an attack of the enemy, so very strongly situated as they were at White-Marsh, would have been highly imprudent.”

*Pages 86, 87, 88, and 89, contain a description of Washington's situation at Valley-Forge in the winter of 1777, and spring of 1778—and an accusation against me for not having attacked him in that situation.*

The author's plan of besieging the enemy at Valley-Forge is in the highest degree absurd. Had I made a division of the troops in the manner he proposes, I should have exposed them to be beaten in detail. I have in my Narrative given a reason why I ought not to have risked an attack with so small a prospect of success. Major-General Grey's evidence, however, may perhaps be deemed more decisive.

Q. “ Do you think it would have been adviseable to have attacked the enemy at Valley-Forge in the winter, when the army lay at Philadelphia ?”

A. “ As affairs were then situated in America, I think an attack on the enemy at Valley-Forge, so strongly posted as they were, both by nature and art, would have been very unjustifiable.”

Q. “ Do you recollect any instance of Sir William Howe’s  
“ omitting any opportunity of attacking the enemy, when it  
“ could have been done with a reasonable prospect of advantage,  
“ considering all respective situations and circumstances at the  
“ time?”

A. “ All circumstances considered, the choice of difficulties  
“ in carrying on a war in the strongest country in the world,  
“ with almost an unanimous people to defend it, and the number  
“ of troops the Commander in Chief had to overcome those  
“ difficulties, I know of no instance wherein Sir William Howe  
“ ever omitted attacking the enemy, or of his not doing every  
“ thing that was possible to be done, to promote his Majesty’s  
“ service, and the honour of the British arms.”

Page 90.] *He omitted to support General Burgoyne, or even to make a diversion on the coast of Massachusetts-Bay in his favour, though he knew such was his Majesty’s pleasure.*

For an answer to this, see my Narrative (pages 12 and 17).

Page 90.] *And he took care not to suffer Sir Henry Clinton to perform those important services, by not leaving him sufficient force, though the rebel army, at that time, consisted of less than one third of his own effective force.—British force 17,000 veteran troops.—Rebel force 8,000 new raised undisciplined men.*

In my Narrative (page 23) I have stated, that I left at New-York under the command of Sir Henry Clinton “ about 8,500  
“ men, exclusive of sick and convalescents, and exclusive of a  
“ small body of militia upon Long-Island.” In a return now before me, dated at New-York, 1st of October, 1777, I find he had at that time under his immediate command, exclusive of the corps of artillery and light horse—

Infantry, rank and file, fit for duty	-	8,340
Ditto on publick employ	-	52
Ditto on command	-	419
Ditto sick	-	1,356
		<hr/>
		10,167



My instructions to Sir Henry Clinton (page 22) prove that I did not lose sight of offensive operations up Hudson's river in the event of Washington's following me into Pennsylvania.

The propriety of the expedition to Pennsylvania (although approved of by his Majesty's Secretary of State for the American department) was a long time the principal point of discussion in Parliament, and in the publick prints, I therefore stated the subject fully and fairly in my Narrative: And for a further elucidation, I refer the reader to the evidence since given by Major-General Grey to the House of Commons respecting that expedition.

Page 92.] *He supinely suffered himself to be surprised at German-Town.*

I have given a candid account of the circumstances relative to the attack made upon the King's troops at German-Town, in my Narrative (page 27) the accuracy of which I shall support by an extract from Sir George Osborne's evidence in the House of Commons.

Q. "Do you recollect any orders you received the day before the action at German-Town?"

A. "On that day I was to the right of the infantry, with the grenadiers of his Majesty's guards. Sir William Howe came to the quarters I was in with his Aids-du-camp, a little before sun-set, and gave me orders to move on in front, with the grenadiers, and light-infantry of the guards, to Major Simcoe's post, about half a mile in front of the line of infantry; acquainting me at the same time, that I might expect the enemy at day-break next morning. I can therefore add, that the firing of the enemy, on the morning of the attack of German-Town, began exactly, or near the time, that Sir William Howe acquainted me, the night before, it would do."

Q. "From the evidence you have given, do you apprehend, that Sir William Howe had certain intelligence, on the even-

“ ing preceding the attack at German-Town, that the enemy  
“ would march towards him ?”

A. “ I believe I have been pretty accurate in my answer to  
“ the first question, in which I said, that Sir William Howe  
“ came to the house in which I was posted, and informed me,  
“ that the enemy would begin the attack in the morning exactly  
“ at the hour at which they did.”

Q. “ Notwithstanding the declaration from the Commander  
“ in Chief of the army, do you conceive, that our army was  
“ surprised at German-Town, or otherwise ?”

A. “ What I speak in evidence can be merely in my own  
“ situation, and I hope, it is not arrogance if I say, that after  
“ the information I received from the Commander in Chief, I  
“ was not in any danger of being surprised.”

Q. “ Do you conceive that any other part of the army was  
“ surprised ?”

A. “ I cannot answer to that from my own knowledge, and  
“ therefore, from the situation in which I am, I beg to decline  
“ that Question.”

Q. “ Was it the general opinion of the officers with whom  
“ you conversed after the action, that some other part of the  
“ army was surprised, or not ?”

A. “ That question being exactly the same as the last, only  
“ in other words, I can merely add, that the officers, with  
“ whom I conversed, while I had the honour of serving under  
“ Sir William Howe, were always well satisfied with the care  
“ he had of his army.”

I have now gone through the whole Pamphlet, except the  
Appendix, which requires no particular observation, as it con-  
tains merely a false comparison of the British and rebel forces.

Several other anonymous writers have made free with my repu-  
tation : but of their productions I take no notice, because their  
assertions, their reasoning, and their scurrility, appear to have  
been

been all collected and methodised, in the *Letters to a Nobleman*. My remarks upon that production, have been confined principally to facts: the false reasoning I have sometimes endeavoured to detect; the scurrility, I have always passed over in silence. Contempt is the only species of resentment which the venal instruments of calumny deserve; though something further may be due to their more infamous employers.

WILLIAM HOWE.

F I N I S.











11

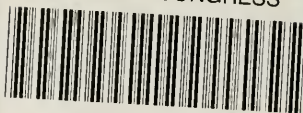








LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 463 384 7

